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IMPERIAL OBITUARY

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IMPERIAL OBITUARY

The Mysterious Death of the British Empire

Major-General
RICHARD HILTON, D.S.O., M.C., D.F.C.

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DEDICATION

To the patriots of all
nations of the Empire, who
deplore its untimely end

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"Except the Lord build the house
Their labour is but lost that build it.
"Except the Lord keep the city
The watchman waketh but in vain."

Psalm of David 127

"Pray God our greatness may not fail
Through craven fears of being great."

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

NOTE

Throughout this book the use of the term "England" refers to England *alone* only up to the Union of the Kingdoms. After that it denotes the United Kingdom and eventually the entire British Empire. Its usage is simply a verbal convenience, and it is hoped that as such it will not be taken amiss.

INTRODUCTION

NINE hundred years ago the Battle of Hastings founded a new nation, which was destined to spread its language, influence, and to a certain extent its way of life, throughout the world.

Being numerically insignificant, for her population at that time scarcely exceeded a million, England did not build the largest empire that the world has ever seen by her own unaided efforts. Scots, Irishmen, and Welshmen played their parts, and many of them very distinguished parts in the building of that empire. But England worked alone till 1707 and has maintained the rôle of predominant partner ever since.

There are other nations of the same racial stock in the north of Europe—Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, Finns and Icelanders. All these possess the same virile qualities which enabled the people of the British Isles to make their mark upon the world. Some of these other nations did in fact figure prominently in history. Sweden was a great military power for nearly two hundred years and almost conquered Russia. In very early times Denmark and Norway explored the coasts of Greenland and Labrador and gave America the name of "Vinland" long before the voyage of Columbus. Their Viking ships were the terror of coastal populations as far afield as the Eastern Mediterranean. Denmark was one of the first nations to discover possibilities of trade with India and, till very recently, she still possessed a substantial overseas empire. And yet, for all their estimable virility, the Scandinavians have not, as a whole, deeply affected the course of the world's history. It seems reasonable to believe that the four small nations of the British Isles might likewise have remained aloof from history, half hidden in the northern mists, had it not been for the fact that England, in 1066, became partially impregnated with the culture of Western Europe.

The Normans, though of the same Nordic race as many of the pre-Norman English, had absorbed much of the French outlook and way of life. Above all the Duchy of Normandy was a part of the French feudal structure. Their arrival in England and eventual fusion with the Saxons inevitably caused England to play a dual rôle in history—that of entanglement in continental affairs as well as that of a maritime nation, whose future lay overseas.

Had Hastings not been fought, neither the British Empire nor the United States of America might ever have come into existence.

What were the root causes of the British Empire or, for that matter, of any other empire? What incentives urge a nation to overflow its own original frontiers and to occupy and administer additional territories? Well over a dozen incentives can easily be brought to mind, and most cases of expansion show a combination of several incentives. The desire for unilateral exploitation of new lands is the usual reason quoted by extremists of the modern school of anti-colonialism. But, although self-interest no doubt actuated British imperialism sometimes, it has rarely, if ever, been the sole reason for an extension of British rule. An unbiased study of the Empire's growth will show that almost every acquisition of fresh territory was actuated primarily by motives which were beyond reproach, and in many cases by motives of a worthy and altruistic nature. Among the former can be counted exploration (a natural and harmless human instinct at a time when new continents were being discovered), legitimate commercial enterprise, and the migration of religious or political refugees from Europe into attractive but sparsely inhabited lands.

Among incentives of an actively worthy nature we find cases where extension of British rule was induced by missionary zeal (in East Africa after Livingstone's travels) or by the urge to suppress social evils, such as the slave-trade, or the blood-baths of Benin and Ashanti, or the burning of Hindu widows in India. Many other advances of British frontiers were made because the peace and order of British administered lands were being disturbed by the anarchy of misrule of a neighbouring state, as when the East India Company successively had to annex Oudh and later the Punjab. There have even been instances where the British were implored by inhabitants of free countries to assume the protection or administration of those countries.

There are some who say that more than sufficient books about the British Empire already exist. It is true up to a point.

To justify publication a history of the British Empire must break new ground. It must challenge generally accepted beliefs and must back its challenge with evidence hitherto suppressed or ignored. This is the present writer's intention.

"Emancipation" of the "undeveloped nations" is one of the generally accepted beliefs of our day. It is held, not only by people whose upbringing has debarred them from seeing any good at all in our country's civilizing work throughout the world, but even by many who were brought up to appreciate the great work of our ancestors. This latter class of thinkers admit readily enough much of the good

which lies to the British Empire's credit. But they argue that the fruit has ripened and ought now to fall from the tree. They maintain, in fact, that the breaking of colonial empires and the emergence of independent nations is but human "progress" in a new and inevitable form.

I

THE BRITISH ISLES AND EUROPE

To understand clearly how a small island came to rule the largest empire in the world one must first obtain a clear picture of England's slightly complicated stance with one foot in Europe and the other striding the seas.

William's victory at Hastings imposed a continental link upon our country. For four hundred years after Hastings Norman kings involved their island kingdom in romantic but fruitless wars with the kingdom of France. Romantic these wars may have been, because it was the age of chivalry and because the English won resounding victories at Tinchebrai, Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt. But fruitless all these victories were for England because the wars themselves were simply dynastic quarrels in which successive English kings, in their capacities as Dukes of Normandy, Counts of Anjou, or claimants for other feudal titles, were using their English soldiers and their English treasury as pawns in a series of feudal land-grabs.

These almost incessant wars culminated about 1337 in the Hundred Years War, which drained both countries of manpower and wealth, but ended in the final expulsion of the English from France, leaving in their hands only Calais, Havre, and the Chateau de Guisnes. This humiliating loss of continental dominions was a blessing in disguise for England, for it freed her for a while from continental entanglements to pursue her true destiny as a maritime nation.

Two valuable intangibilities accrued to England from these otherwise useless wars—a tremendous reputation for steadiness in battle and deadliness of firepower, won by the English archers at Crécy and maintained through changes of weaponry right through to the "contemptibles" of Mons. And secondly a sense of superiority for English fighting seamen over all continental sailors, resulting from the Battle of Sluys.

Though freed from the false destiny of trying to become a continental power, England never after Hastings succeeded in cutting quite apart from continental entanglements. During the long Anglo-French struggle the kings of France had discovered a weak point in their insular enemy's armour—the simmering hostility toward England evinced by Scotland, Wales, and (later) Ireland. Time and

again right up to modern times France, Spain, and latterly Germany, tried without success to stab England in the back by means of real or fancied anti-English sentiments in one or other of the Celtic countries. For a long time, while Scotland was still a separate kingdom, this danger of a war on two fronts was often a cause of grave anxiety to England, and this danger persisted until the Jacobite rising of 1745. But in latter years the fusion of the four small nations into a generally united British nation reduced this danger to the comparatively trivial dimensions of subversive action by separatist factions in Ireland. It is important to note that this danger was abolished, not by military English action against her smaller partners, but by the gradual growth of a spirit of loyalty to one *British* nationality under one monarch.

Proof of this can be found in the fact that Irishmen have always been among the finest soldiers in the British Army. They have provided many of our best and most distinguished generals. Even today, despite the neutrality of the Irish Republic and its self-exclusion from the Commonwealth, Irishmen continue to enlist enthusiastically in the British Army.

Quite apart from the occasional intrigues of England's continental enemies with her partners in the British Isles, the evolution of maritime commerce progressively tended to reduce the value of the Channel as an isolating barrier against entanglement in continental affairs. Though the narrow strip of sea retained its strategic value as an obstacle to invasion, and has continued to do so up to the present day (as Hitler found in 1940) yet from Hastings onward it has become progressively more and more a concern for English statesmen and strategists to see that no hostile power shall dominate Europe, and, above all, that such a power shall not establish itself firmly along the coast between the River Seine and the Zuider Zee.

Thus it has been a constant problem for British statesmen, throughout the gradual building of an overseas empire, to reconcile the conflicting claims of what came to be called the "blue water school" and the "continental school" of thought. In our peacetime economic, diplomatic, and social policies no less than in our wartime strategy a correct balance has always required to be sought between the demands of these usually conflicting calls.

England, and in due course Great Britain, has never been able to ignore the Continent. But this has never meant and does not mean now that she must jettison all her oceanic commitments and ties and resign herself to becoming a mere "off-shore island" of Europe, as a former prime minister has inaptly called her.

Many instances can be noted to illustrate how difficult a problem this has been for British statesmen. Perhaps the most striking example was the clash of wills between King George II and the elder William

Pitt (Earl of Chatham) during the Seven Years War, when the king's Hanoverian predilections made him detest Pitt's "blue water strategy" which the king regarded as Pitt's neglect of the war in Europe.

When (in chapters II, III and V) study is made of the two great overseas struggles for North America and for India respectively, readers should constantly bear in mind, while reading of those overseas wars, the simultaneous drag on British resources which was imposed upon our country by this need to maintain at any rate a balance of power upon the European continent itself.

Fortunately, of course, this need to split resources fell equally heavily upon our rivals for colonial expansion—namely Portugal, Spain, Holland, and eventually France. Indeed the ruin of three of these competitors for empire may be ascribed largely to their inability to strike a happy mean in their allocations of national energy to colonial enterprise and to continental campaigning respectively. The two small countries, Portugal and Holland, though each of them in turn enjoyed a brilliant period of colonial greatness, both fell out of the race through sheer inability to support simultaneously the burden of overseas empire-building and of foreign pressures upon their land frontiers in Europe. Portugal was conquered by Philip II of Spain for eighty years and shared in the downfall of that great empire. Holland was so weakened by her long resistance to Louis XIV of France that her overseas empire ceased to expand at a critical moment in the race.

The case of Spain was perhaps the most instructive of all. For a hundred years she held the lead as the world's richest and most powerful nation. Her empire covered most of South America and nearly half of North America, together with the Philippines and many other Pacific archipelagos. In Europe she ruled much of Italy, Sardinia, Franche-Comté, Belgium, and for a while Holland also. Despite popular belief, it was not the defeat of her Armada in 1588 which finished her as a great power. It was the fact that her crown had passed by inheritance into the powerful, ambitious, and bigoted Hapsburg family. The wealth of Mexico and Peru was poured out to serve Hapsburg policy and to support the Roman Catholic faith against the Protestant Reformation. Into the resultant Thirty Years War, nominally a religious struggle between the two divisions of Christendom, Spain's fanatical young king, Philip III, threw all his kingdom's resources of wealth and manpower. It was an awful example of how not to strike a sane balance between colonial and continental effort. Spain, as a world power, bled to death.

Of all the European aspirants to colonial empire only France and England managed to strike a healthy balance in this vital matter. England, though she made mistakes, never fell under the complete control of any military dictator, ambitious for showy conquests of

European lands. After being finally cured by Joan of Arc of all dreams of French overlordship, England's wars on the Continent became simply ways of maintaining the balance of power. As far as concerned the Continent itself, they were no longer wars of conquest but wars to prevent conquest. England's enemy on the Continent became always that potentate or nation which at the time was the biggest menace to European freedom.

Thus England tackled and defeated in turn Philip of Spain, Louis XIV of France, Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany, and Hitler.

To gauge the extent of British entanglement with Europe one has only to list the wars undertaken against European powers on the continent of Europe, or in European coastal waters, from the end of the Wars of the Roses, a bloody but pointless civil war, down to the Battle of Waterloo. It should be remembered that every one of these wars had its decisive effect, for the reasons already explained, not only on the gradual building of a British Empire in other continents but also, up to and including the Seven Years War, upon the birth of a mighty English-speaking independency, the United States of America. Without such naval victories in Europe as the Armada battle (1588), La Hogue (1692), and Quiberon Bay (1759), or such land victories as Blenheim (1704), Ramillies (1706), Oudenarde (1708), Malplaquet (1709), and Minden (1759), the United States could never even have come into existence. This fact will become clear in chapter III when we study England's struggle for North America, which opened the way for the thirteen Atlantic colonies to spread themselves westward to the Pacific across the formerly French-owned Mississippi valley.

To sum up, the inhabitants of the British Isles from 1066 onward became progressively more involved with the situation on the continent nearby. Their success and progress in empire-building depended among other factors upon the skill of British statesmen in assessing the *minimum* proportion of British effort to be expended on maintenance of British interests on the Continent of Europe in order that the *maximum* should be available for oceanic and transoceanic enterprise—above all in seizing and keeping command of the seas.

It has never been easy to find the correct apportionment of effort and adhere to it, partly because war and diplomacy are not sciences, subject to precise measurements, but are rather arts based on human judgements. An even greater difficulty has always confronted British statesmen, even those enlightened ones who saw clearly the major importance of the oceanic field of endeavour over the continental. In enforcing the policy which they knew to be correct even the enlightened statesmen have always had to deal with opposition from factions who failed to realize that, for Great Britain, the European

commitment should always take second place to the wider oceanic vision.

It took hundreds of years for the spirit of enlightenment to rid English kings of their yearnings to recover the lost feudal lands in France. Then came a long period of religious altercation, when wiser statesmen had to resist the clamour of Protestants to rush to the rescue of Huguenots in France or to the aid of Dutchmen against Spain. The Stuart kings were apt to intrigue in the opposite direction—to plot with France or Spain for co-operation in defence of the Roman Church against the Reformation. Cromwell himself allowed his religious bias to override his diplomatic judgement when he persisted in regarding Spain as the enemy long after she had ceased to be a menace to England.

Walpole, against his better judgement, was chivvied by popular outcry into war with Spain over the matter of "Jenkin's ear", and thus was responsible for England's unprepared embroilment in war with both France and Spain, united in the Bourbon "Family Compact".

Pitt the Elder's disagreement with his king concerning aid to Hanover has already been mentioned. He was by no means the only statesman of the "blue water school" to fall foul of the Hanoverian point of view.

So this conflict has rumbled on between the two schools of thought up to our present times. The argument has been based not only on strategic issues but has included questions of economics and the very political future of Great Britain as an independent nation. We hear much today about the Common Market, whose exponents, like the various "Europeans" of old, wish us to pin our national future upon complete political submersion into Europe. To put the matter at its mildest, such a policy would run directly contrary to the one which enabled our small nation to build a world-wide empire.

2

THE RACE FOR OVERSEAS EXPANSION

ALMOST as soon as Europe began to emerge from the "Dark Ages" of barbarism which followed the fall of the Roman Empire, rumours were heard of wonderful civilizations somewhere far to the east. Sometimes under the name of Cathay (or China) and sometimes described as "the Indies", men talked about the fabulous wealth of these distant lands and of the herbs and spices grown there, which could render appetizing the unpalatable European food of those primitive days.

These rumours were soon substantiated by samples of these spices, including a new herb called "tea", which reached the Eastern Mediterranean by camel caravans either across the Arabian Desert or through the wild mountains of Anatolia. At this time the Republic of Venice led the known world in maritime trade. Her merchants carried the new "tea" and other delicious spices by ship from Constantinople or Beirut to Western Mediterranean ports, whence the goods penetrated all over Western Europe for those who could afford to buy them. Besides spices many treasures of art and culture reached the markets of Europe by the long caravan routes across Asia—gold and silver ornaments, rich carpets and silks.

In 1295 Marco Polo, a Venetian explorer, returned to his native city with astounding reports of his travels and adventures, which included twenty years of personal service at the court of Kublai Khan, the great emperor of the East. From then onward a brisk trade sprang up between the emperor's dominions and the two republics of Venice and Genoa, from which most of Western Europe derived benefit.

Besides the overland trade by camel caravans, Arab dhows also brought Chinese and Indian merchandise up the Red Sea to Suez, whence camels carried it to Alexandria or Beirut, where it was loaded into Venetian ships.

While the huge Mongol Empire of Genghiz Khan remained strong and united, a remarkable degree of law and order prevailed in Central Asia, so that the trade routes were safe and peaceful. But after the death of Kublai Khan, a grandson of the great Genghiz, the empire broke up into warring provinces. The final fatal blows to Venetian

trade, both by the overseas route and by the Red Sea, were the invasions of the Levant by Ottoman Turks, culminating in the capture of Constantinople (then called Byzantium), the capital of Eastern Christendom. A blanket of fierce religious intolerance replaced the broad-minded protection of trade, which had been shown by former rulers of Asia. Europe found herself cut off from the good things of the East, just at the time when Europeans had acquired a taste for these luxuries.

For many years learned men had suspected that the world was not flat but globular. Though some still doubted it, this theory encouraged the hope that, if the riches of Cathay and the Indies could no longer be reached by the old routes, they might be reached either round the south of Africa or even by sailing westward. If, as seemed probable, the world was round, one had only to keep going far enough across the Atlantic Ocean to find the eastern shores of China and the Indies.

Strong support for this idea had been provided by reports of transatlantic voyages by Norwegians nearly five hundred years before the fall of Constantinople made westward exploration a vital matter. People remembered tales of how Erik of Norway and his son Leif Eriksson had colonized a northern isle called Iceland, and had gone further west and found enormous land masses. These might, it seemed, be the north-eastern shores of Asia. If fresh transatlantic exploration were to be aimed further south than Iceland, why should not a landfall be made in the Indies themselves?

This idea stirred the imaginations of geographers, and excited the spirit of adventure in seafaring men throughout Europe, but particularly in the countries facing the Atlantic.

The mariners of Western Europe quickly perceived that a great opportunity had fallen to them. The merchant fleets of Venice and Genoa were built for the landlocked Mediterranean. Their ships were propelled either by lateen sails, suitable only for running before Mediterranean breezes, or else they were galleons, propelled by slaves. But the ships of Western European harbours, facing the Atlantic, were designed for the open ocean. The lost trade of Venice and Genoa seemed ready to fall into the laps of Atlantic nations.

Unfortunately England's rulers were slow to act. The Wars of the Roses, that wasteful civil war, only ended in 1485, and the country still remained in bad shape for foreign enterprises till nearly the end of the century. It was not till 1497 that Sebastian Cabot and his son John, Genoese seamen who lived in Bristol, managed to interest King Henry VII of England in the possibilities of transatlantic exploration. By that time Portugal, under the inspiring impulse of Prince Henry the Navigator (incidentally half-English on his mother's side), had been hard at work exploring the eastward

route to India round the southern tip of Africa. Bartholomew Diaz rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1487, though he did not at first realize the importance of his discovery. Eleven years later Vasco da Gama, another Portuguese, landed in India itself, and the brief but gallant period of Portuguese colonial predominance began.

Spain started in the race much later than her neighbour, owing to the necessity of first conquering Granada, the remnant of four hundred years of Moorish occupation. She left the African route to Portugal and concentrated upon trying to reach the Indies by striking due west across the Atlantic.

In 1492, the same year that Granada was made Spanish, Christopher Columbus, another Genoese, but in the service of Spain, landed on one of the smaller islands of the Caribbean Sea and went on to discover some large and very fertile islands.

He named the first of these Hispaniola (now divided into the republics of Haiti and Santo Domingo) and the other he called Cuba. The lush tropical fertility of these islands made him think that he had reached the fabulous spice islands, so he chose the name "West Indies" for the whole archipelago. Though Columbus himself was ungratefully treated, his discoveries were avidly followed up by Spain. Within a century of his historic discovery a Spanish colonial empire had been established over the whole of South America except Brazil and Guiana, over Mexico and Central America and most of the West Indies, and over that part of the present United States where Spanish place-names still predominate—namely the states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Texas, and Florida.

Juan de Fuca Strait, where the present Canadian southern frontier touches the Pacific, was discovered in 1592 by an explorer of that name, and so marks the furthest Spanish advance up that coast, though Spain does not appear to have occupied the land north of the forty-second parallel.

In the Pacific Ocean itself she had possession of the Philippine Islands and laid claims to the Marianas, Pelews, Carolinas, Ladrones, and Bonin archipelagos. Portugal, meanwhile, had established a maritime and mercantile supremacy in the Indian Ocean and along both flanks of Africa. Under her brilliant imperialist, Albuquerque, her fleets even dominated the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Her trading stations were sprinkled along most shores from Sierra Leone to Timor.

In South America she had established her claim to the enormous land of Brazil, thanks to a papal bull which had divided the whole unexplored world between Spain and Portugal by a north-south line down the middle of the Altantic. As the most eastern part of Brazil protruded to the east of that line both the Iberian kingdoms accepted the fact that Portugal "owned" that corner of the New World.

Indeed, until the great split in Christendom, known as the Protestant Reformation, all Christian kings and peoples accepted without question Pope Alexander VI's pronouncement on the ownership of newly discovered lands. In the eyes of devout Christians Spain and Portugal alone had a divine right to the new lands. This belief, superimposed on the internal troubles of England and France, goes far to explain the long unchallenged start enjoyed by Spain and Portugal in the race for overseas expansion.

Even though the Cabots eventually succeeded by their own enthusiasm in persuading Henry VII of England to finance their transatlantic ventures, English interest in the bleak northern shores of Labrador and Hudson Bay remained dormant for many years. Henry VIII, who succeeded his father in 1509, was too busily engaged with his own matrimonial problems, with his quarrel with the Pope, with his resultant supppression of the English monasteries and with confiscations of Church property, to have much time for overseas exploration. His religious policies were by no means popular with large numbers of his subjects, particularly in the north of England, whence a serious gesture of public protest, known as the "Pilgrimage of Grace" marched upon London and was suppressed by the king with unscrupulous deceit and severity.

Neither king nor people, in fact, were sufficiently free from domestic disturbances to enter the race for lands abroad. An important effect of the Protestant Reformation was, however, very slowly manifesting itself in countries where the mental discipline of the Roman Church was losing its hold on certain Christians. In England, particularly among the seafaring folk of Devon, respect for Alexander VI's famous bull, giving colonizing monopoly to Spain and Portugal, rapidly diminished. Men like Sir Humphrey Gilbert, Hawkins, Frobisher, Drake, and Raleigh, dared to question the right of the "Bishop of Rome" to parcel out the world to two Romish kingdoms, or to deprive English sailors of the freedom to explore.

But these men of independent thought were in advance of their times. Even when the spread of Protestant thought had rendered Pope Alexander's decree a dead letter in the minds of Protestants, there still lingered an unwillingness to flaunt the might of Spain too openly. For Spain was still the world's most powerful nation, and continued to be formidable even after the defeat of her Armada. For these reasons, when English ships first began to trespass on the alleged preserves of Spain and Portugal, these forays were for a long time conducted as a form of private enterprise by a few bold spirits, often financing their expeditions out of their own pockets. Their voyages were disowned and even condemned officially by the authorities of England, though secretly admired, encouraged, and sometimes rewarded.

For many years these English adventures were limited to exploratory voyages, illegal in Spanish eyes, designed mainly to discover a west-about sea route to India. Raids on Spanish harbours and seizures of treasure ships, closely resembling piracy, were undertaken as a side-line to exploration. Drake's greatest exploit, the circumnavigation of the world, was an outstanding example of this undeclared "cold war" at sea. The West Indies became a favourite hunting ground for semi-piratical ships of many nations—English, Dutch, and Huguenot French in the main, who harried the Spanish treasure fleets carrying gold and silver from Mexico and beyond.

But in all these maritime enterprises scarcely any attempt was made for a very long time to annex overseas territory or to colonize it. The buccaneers, who preyed upon the Spanish treasure traffic, used often to seize some small West Indian island and make it their temporary base while careening the hulls of their ships. But in this there was no question of national sovereignty.

When at length Englishmen became emboldened to take this further step in challenging the claims of Spain they selected for their first colonial experiment a part of the North American coast well clear of those regions occupied by Spain. The very first attempt at colonization was sponsored by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1585. He chose the Atlantic coast between Florida (where the Spaniards were already established) and the bleak iceberg-infested shores of the far north. He named the new country Virginia in honour of Queen Elizabeth, though in fact his first settlement was planted on Roanoke Island off the North Carolina coast. His first attempt ended in failure, and it was not till early in the seventeenth century that permanent English communities took root along the Atlantic coast between Georgia and Maine.

The slow growth of these early settlements into the thirteen colonies who broke away will be studied in the next chapter. In extenuation of this slowness it should be remembered that, during this crucial seventeenth century, England suffered civil war for nine years and a totalitarian dictatorship for nine more. London was ravaged by plague and a disastrous fire. The wonder is that any progress at all was made in New England and Virginia during such a troubled period.

Simultaneously with the semi-piratical exploits of Drake and Hawkins on the Spanish Main, other Englishmen persisted in their dream of finding a "north-west passage" or sea route round the top of the American continent to China and the Indies.

In 1576 Sir Humphrey Gilbert, a Devon squire, wrote a book called *A Discourse to prove a Passage by the north-west to Cathaia (China) and the East Indies*. Inspired by this book Martin Frobisher, another Devon man, persuaded Queen Elizabeth to grant him licence

to seek for the supposed passage. He brought back samples of mineral ore, but it proved worthless and interest waned. Gilbert persisted, and in 1583 he personally led five ships to Hudson Bay to continue Frobisher's probe. Gilbert spent his private fortune on the expedition and himself sailed in the smallest ship—the *Squirrel* of only ten tons. She was lost with all hands on the return passage. Only the *Golden Hind* reached home.

However, belief in a north-west passage was strengthened by the *Golden Hind's* reports of the very vastness of the Hudson inlet. It was known too that, a little farther to the south, the French had been penetrating the continent deeply along a large estuary called the St. Lawrence.

The French appear to have been considerably more impressed by the exploration of the two Cabots than was the country for whose benefit the voyages were made. In 1534, about a generation after the Cabots, Jacques Cartier led a French expedition, which discovered the mouth of the St. Lawrence river and penetrated up it for some distance. Wherever he landed he planted the French flag and claimed the country for his king.

Next year he returned and reached a large Indian village named Hochelaga, near which he built a fort and named it Mont Royal, a name later contracted into Montreal. The Indians gave him a friendly reception, but he stupidly antagonized them by carrying off their king. Consequently, when he made a third voyage in 1541 with five ships, carrying settlers, he found the Indians hostile. So he dropped downstream again to a broad reach, overlooked by an imposing cliff, which is said to have caused his men to exclaim in admiration "Que bec!" thus giving name to the present great city and province. Near here he built another fort, which he named Charlesbourg.

Just as Gilbert and other Englishmen fondly hoped that the great inlet of Hudson Bay was going to take them right through to the Pacific, so Cartier and later French explorers imagined that the great St. Lawrence estuary and its vast lakes were going to provide them with the desired "north-west passage" to China. In actual fact, as can be seen on a modern map, this inland waterway took them not due west but south-west, so that French exploration and settlement curled round the westerly hinterland of the English colonies of New England and Virginia. How this clash of interests was sorted out will be studied in the next chapter.

Meanwhile in the East the same Protestant loss of respect for Pope Alexander's bull was encouraging English, Dutch, and Danish merchants to challenge Portugal's monopoly of Indian trade. Chartered companies began to be formed by city merchants of London, Amsterdam, and Copenhagen, to exploit the opportunities opened up by flouting the papally granted monopoly. Of the London com-

panies one undertook the development of Virginia (while a Plymouth company handled that of New England). But of all these chartered companies by far the most famous was the Honourable Company of Merchants of London, trading to the East Indies, better known as the East India Company. Its charter was granted by Queen Elizabeth on the last day of 1599.

At first this organization and its Dutch and Danish rivals were interested solely in trade. The great spice islands of Java and Sumatra, rather than the Indian continent itself, were the major attraction, particularly for the Dutch. For some years the Portuguese, jealous in defence of their monopoly, were regarded by the north-European interlopers as the only enemy. But, as the power of Portugal waned before the growing aggressiveness of the Dutch, these latter showed an increasing resentment against sharing the spice trade with the English. Fighting broke out between ships of the two nations, culminating in the torture and judicial murder of some English traders by the Dutch governor in the island of Amboyna (1623).

From then onward the English company transferred its interest to India itself, leaving the East Indian islands to the Dutch. It has been falsely reported by some historians that the English abandoned their activities in the spice islands as a direct result of this Dutch outrage, thus implying some degree of timidity to our forefathers. Actually it was no case of cause and effect at all but merely a coincidence in timing.

By now Oriental spices were ceasing to be a novelty in the markets of Europe. Owing to the rupture of the Portuguese monopoly and the large fleets of Dutch merchant ships engaged in the trade, spices no longer fetched the high prices of a century back. There was something approaching a glut on the spice market. On the other hand English merchants were starting to take a keen interest in the possibilities of India itself for several reasons.

An English Jesuit, Stevens, who had lived in Goa for some years, sent home glowing reports about the magnificence of the Mogul emperor's court in Delhi and of the wealth which merchants of Portugal were acquiring by trade with India. He was by no means the first source of intelligence on this subject. As far back as the reign of Henry VIII a Venetian ship was wrecked on the Isle of Wight. Sir William Monson, seeing the priceless cargo brought ashore, was so incensed that this rich carrying trade should be carried only in foreign ships that he founded a chartered company—one of the earliest of its kind—to capture some of this trade from the shipowners of Venice. His company was called the Turkey Merchants because their plan was simply to ship Indian goods from Beirut or Alexandria, as the Venetians had been doing for years.

It was not long before the more ambitious idea was born of fetch-

ing the goods all the way from India by English ships so as to secure not merely a part but all of the profits of the carrying trade.

It was comparatively easy for Englishmen to travel to India long before any English ships touched there, but they had to go either in Portuguese ships (as Stevens did) or overland through Russia and Persia to the Persian Gulf. Many merchants in fact did this for the purpose of buying for the English market, but it was galling to English pride and business instincts to be forced to bring the goods in foreign ships. Transport overland up the Volga was tried, but the cost was prohibitive.

Hence came the various attempts to find alternative sea routes by the "north-west passage" over Canada or by the "north-east passage" over the top of Russia. The routes round the Cape of Good Hope and the one taken by Drake through Magellan Straits were at first deemed unsuitable for large-scale passage of English trade ships on account of the lingering unwillingness to flout the Iberian kingdoms too openly.

Stevens' promising reports were substantiated by a party of four travellers, Storey, Newberry, Leedes, and Ralph Fitch, who between them taught English merchants more about India than they had learned from any earlier source. Storey remained as a monk in Goa. Newberry died on the way home. Leedes, a jeweller, took service under the Mogul emperor Akbar the Great. Fitch stayed abroad for eight years and performed journeys to almost every corner of the Indian peninsula—journeys which rivalled the exploits of Marco Polo, though not so widely known.

All these four, as well as Stevens, contributed by their letters a growing volume of commercial intelligence for the City of London.

It was these reports, coupled with recognition of the fact that there existed no alternative sea route to the one round the Cape of Good Hope, which led to the formation of the East India Company. Captain Cavendish, who in 1586-1588 repeated Drake's tour of the world, convinced the city merchants that, in view of the hostility of Spain and Portugal, the only way by which the Indian trade could be tapped by English ships would be by armed ships, sailing in large convoys. It was no work for small firms with solitary ships. Hence the need for a chartered company.

To understand what happened during these early years of European rivalry we must remember that the morals of the sea were still somewhat primitive. The distinction betwen piracy and "lawful occasions" was blurred in the minds of quite worthy and respectable seafarers. The convenient practice of forcible buying and selling was not considered wrong. If a well-armed ship met a weaker one, her captain thought nothing of persuading the weaker one to exchange

cargoes, perhaps with a monetary consideration. The terms of the deal were often dictated by the better-armed merchant ship.

There were, as now, degrees of honesty and scruple among merchants, seamen, colonial administrators, and others. As now, one bad case was publicized and remembered when a hundred good men were forgotten. So it came about that an outrage, such as that of the Dutch governor against some English traders in Amboyna, was magnified into a typical example of Dutch conduct.

The same was true of the piratical cruise of two English ships, the *Tiger* and the *Tiger's Whelp* under Sir Edward Mitchelbourne, a man appointed by King James I, despite protests by the East India Company, who had already declined his services. This expedition prowled the China Sea for some time, causing havoc among peaceful Chinese junks, with the result that the reputation of Englishmen was blackened throughout the Far East for many years.

As a result of the official antagonism of the Spanish and Portuguese authorities toward interloping ships from the Protestant nations, it followed that armed merchant ships of those interlopers soon began to consider any Spanish or Portuguese ship fair game. It was not long before this lucrative custom encouraged English ships to attack Dutch traders and vice versa.

It is instructive at this point to note the differences of incentive that were spurring the various nations of Europe to spread their activities overseas. Spanish and Portuguese expansion was primarily based on a religious motive. Having fought the Moors for four centuries and at last evicted them from the Peninsula, these two nations naturally regarded themselves as champions of Christendom against all comers. The discovery of distant lands, whose peoples were not even Moslems but pagans, stirred the crusading ardour of kings and clergy profoundly. Missionary ardour was given an additional impetus by knowledge of the immense wealth to be won by conquest of these heathen lands. Consequently, in both these cases, overseas enterprise was regarded and conducted as an extension of the long religious war. Private enterprise scarcely came into it. The State and the Church controlled all operations and pocketed most of the gains. Both for religious and mercenary reasons the intrusion of heretical commercial rivals was bitterly resented and fiercely opposed.

With England and Holland, however, the incentives toward overseas enterprise were almost entirely commercial, and in both cases the initiative was provided mainly by private enterprise.

As soon as the pace of rivalry became too acute for small men to compete, the answer was the formation of big chartered companies by the merchants of London and Amsterdam. In neither case did the respective monarchs or governments do much more than register mild interest.

But there quickly arose a difference between the actual policies adopted for furthering overseas trade. The Dutch had hardly ousted the Portuguese from Malacca, Ceylon, and other places when they came to the conclusion that it was necessary to conquer and rule the eastern markets in order to ensure them for Holland. The English, on the other hand, definitely rejected the idea of saddling themselves with the responsibility of government. Their sole wish at first was to trade, and they persisted in this policy till absolutely forced by historical evolution to assume responsibility for government. This divergence of outlook was largely due to the conditions which the Europeans found in their respective spheres of development.

In the East Indies the Dutch had to deal with numerous small rulers in an archipelago of a thousand islands—large and small, with populations, some civilized and others very primitive. There was no strong central government. Piracy was rife.

In India itself the English found at first an apparently strong central government—that of the Mogul emperor in Delhi.

They only discovered gradually that the monolithic power of the Peacock Throne was illusory. During the early stages of the Company's development of the Indian trade the status of a purely commercial body, operating on territory of the Delhi emperor and under his jurisdiction, proved reasonably convenient. When Aurungzebe died in 1707 the Mogul Empire disintegrated rapidly and the British were faced by a new and formidable responsibility.

If we turn back to the early stages of North American colonization we see that the English here had quite a different incentive and quite a different approach to the problem. They did not go to Virginia to trade, as they did to India. They went there to found a new homeland for white men in a primitive and savage land. They went there from the first as rulers of the newly occupied countries, for no other government existed.

The Dutch on the other hand took an active interest in the region where New York now stands and at first their interest was primarily trading. They found in the Iroquois Indians ("The Five Nations") a political organization of unusual stability as compared with the rudimentary tribal régimes of most redskin communities. In North America therefore the outlooks and methods of English and Dutch were reversed, as compared with their attitudes in Asia.

France, from the very start of her career as an empire building nation, conducted her activities as a matter of state policy under fairly tightly centralized governmental control. Her despatch of Jacques Cartier to the St. Lawrence, her subsequent follow-up by the explorers Champlain, La Salle, Joliet, and Marquette, and above all her comparatively late but determined bid for possession of India—all

these were government-inspired and government-backed moves in a deliberate and conscious plan for imperial aggrandizement.

By the end of the seventeenth century and the commencement of the eighteenth the stage was set for a long and desperate struggle between England and France for the domination both of North America and India. Spain and Portugal were fading out of these two arenas. Holland, after a brilliant start, was doomed to give up her North American ambitions and to restrict her Asiatic one to the spice islands. This was due to her inability to carve out an overseas destiny while precariously saving her national independence amid the great continental wars of Europe. England and France alone were big enough and strong enough to endure the strain of continental wars and at the same time strike out for empire.

3

THE STRUGGLE FOR NORTH AMERICA

NOTHING is known of Henry Hudson except his three voyages of discovery betwen April 1607 and Midsummer Day of 1611, when he was cast adrift by his mutinous crew in the great bay which bears his name. The first voyage, though gallant, achieved very little beyond confirmation of the growing belief that no sea passage was practicable either north of Russia or of Canada.

For his second expedition he took service with the Dutch East India Company (though himself an Englishman) and set out in command of the *Half Moon* to see whether one of the large inlets much further south might perhaps pierce right through to the Pacific.

He had carefully studied the reports of a coastal survey which Captain John Smith, the famous leader of the Virginian pioneers, had already made of the Chesapeake inlet. Hudson's plan was to continue the coastal survey northward toward Cape Cod, for here lay a stretch of coast hitherto unexplored.

He sailed past the great Delaware inlet, probably thinking that it would only take him back into the creeks already surveyed by Smith. Rounding Sandy Hook, he entered another fine bay, and landed at the present site of New York, whence he sailed on for about 150 miles up the river which now bears his name.

When he reached the tidal limit the course of the upper river convinced him that this was no through passage to China. By an extraordinary coincidence at that same moment Champlain, governor of the French settlements in Canada, had come to the same conclusion, having descended the *upper* reaches of the same river, past the lake now bearing his name, till he arrived within fifty miles of Hudson. Both explorers turned back, simultaneously convinced that they were not on the through route to China.

This strange occurrence seems a good starting point for a study of the subsequent struggle for ownership between the three nations concerned. For one result of Hudson's voyage was that his Dutch employers became deeply interested in his enthusiasm for the pleasant land and natural harbours of the Atlantic Coast. An expedition was sent to his newly discovered inlet. Possession was taken of that region in the name of the Dutch Republic and a town named New Amsterdam was founded, later to be renamed New York. Thus a wedge

of Dutch territory was driven in between the immature young English settlements of Virginia and New England.

Champlain's southward probe down the Hudson River was a symptom of the keen interest which France was evincing in waterways, that might lead to the Pacific. Champlain's discovery, that the Hudson flowed southward and not westward, by no means damped the ardour of French explorers. Having previously found that the great lakes did not provide any westward outlet, they set their hopes on the cluster of small streams, such as the Hudson, which rose just south of a watershed which itself lay not far south of the great lakes. It seemed possible that one or more of these streams might be tributaries of some big river, which might empty itself into the Pacific.

So, from Champlain's time onward, constant French exploration, backed by generous governmental funds, probed southwestward down the many streams, rising only a short distance to the south of the Great Lakes in the present American states of Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. These probes eventually produced an important result, though not the waterway to China which the French had expected.

In 1662 a Spanish traitor, Peñalosa, defected to France, bringing important information. He reported the existence of an immense river, debouching into the Gulf of Mexico between Florida and Mexico. It appeared to come from the direction of the great Canadian lakes. This naturally aroused doubts among French authorities as to whether the streams, which they had been exploring, reached the Pacific after all. It happened that about this time (1666) there arrived in French Canada three men whose names earned a place among the world's great explorers--Joliet, Marquette, and La Salle. The first two proved, in 1673, that the Ohio River flowed into the Mississippi by canoeing downstream as far as where the River Arkansas joins in from the west.

This left little doubt that *all* the rivers of the big central plain must flow into the Gulf of Mexico and not into the Pacific Ocean. The matter was settled beyond shadow of doubt when La Salle, in 1682, navigated all the way down the Illinois River and the Mississippi to the sea.

Now Joliet and Marquette were only missionaries, but La Salle was a government official of high degree. Having the authority which his predecessors lacked, he formally claimed the entire territory, watered by these great rivers, as French territory, naming the vast region Louisiana in honour of King Louis XIV.

It should be noted that this name covered not only the present state, so called, but included the whole "middle west" beyond the Allegheny Mountains. Its western boundary was almost limitless, as France intended to annex anything in that direction which the Spaniards had not actually occupied.

When one takes into account the fact that two English kings, James I and Charles I, had already, by successive charters, granted the Ohio valley to their new colony of Virginia, and when it is realized that English settlers had already started making their homes in that area when La Salle "annexed" it for France, it becomes clear that even before the seventeenth century ended there existed the makings of an inevitable struggle for North America between England and France.

The threatened complication of a third rival, the Dutch, was eliminated in 1667, when New Amsterdam was ceded to England and renamed New York. The wedge of Dutch colonization, which had begun to thrust itself between New England and Virginia, became two English colonies, New York and New Jersey. The coming rivalry clarified itself as a matter between England and France.

This is an appropriate moment to observe the progress of the English settlements along the Atlantic coast. As already mentioned, this colonization was characterized from the first by an almost complete lack of governmental support or encouragement. In the reign of King James I this was largely due to the king's pro-Spanish feelings, which were grimly illustrated when he ordered the execution of Sir Walter Raleigh, that patriotic founder of North American colonization. Raleigh had led an expedition to South America in search of the mythical treasure land of El Dorado somewhere near the River Orinoco. He fell foul of the Spanish authorities and protests from Madrid frightened the timid English king. It was the first of far too many acts of appeasement in our history.

When King James died, no improvement took place in governmental attitudes toward colonizing projects. King Charles I and his Parliament soon found themselves too bitterly involved in their growing antagonism to pay much attention to overseas affairs. It was not till Cromwell's brief dictatorship that foreign affairs again became a matter of concern to the English Government. Even then the neglected state of the navy and Cromwell's obstinate failure to perceive that France had now replaced Spain as England's most dangerous enemy prevented England from adopting a bold transatlantic policy. Cromwell's régime and the reign of Charles II were chiefly marked by Anglo-Dutch wars to settle the vexed question of maritime trade—a serious bone of contention between these two Protestant countries. From the colonial point of view the only important results of these years of governmental apathy concerning colonies were the acquisition of Bermuda, Barbados, and the Bahamas early in the century, the capture of Jamaica in 1654, and the already mentioned surrender by the Dutch of their holdings in North America.

This official failure to realize the growing menace of France per-

sisted through the reigns of the last two Stuart kings. It was not till William of Orange ascended the English throne in 1688 that France became recognized as England's enemy of the moment. The new king, with his upbringing in a small Protestant country menaced by the continental ambitions of the Bourbons, at last influenced the foreign policies of England. No longer would time and effort be wasted in quarrels with the Protestant Dutch, no longer would Spain be regarded as a formidable threat. Henceforward France, with her designs for continental domination in Europe and with her rapid colonial development in North America, was seen as an enemy who must be crushed if England herself and all her transatlantic colonies were to survive.

Thus the first eighty-eight years of the seventeenth century were a complete loss of time as far as concerned governmental sponsorship of English overseas expansion. Fortunately, however, this did not mean that no progress was made. Indeed, very much to the contrary. Lack of governmental backing was more than balanced by a great wave of spontaneous migration to the transatlantic shores. The reason for this was the same reason which had caused governmental neglect, i.e., the internal troubles of England.

For the seventeenth century was an era of religious wars, as a result of which first one persecuted religious community and later some other found itself forced to leave the homeland and try to find somewhere in the new world where they could follow their own faith in freedom and peace. Of these the most famous migration was that of the "Pilgrim Fathers", who crossed the Atlantic in the *Mayflower* during the winter of 1620. About a third of them were Puritans out of a total of one hundred. In mitigation of previous remarks concerning King James I's colonial timidity and apathy, it is right to mention that the *Mayflower* set out from Plymouth with the king's cordial approval, he having taken a friendly and personal interest in their plans. They landed near Cape Cod.

Other contingents followed, followers of diverse religious sects. The Protestant Reformation had rapidly hatched numerous splinter groups quite apart from the big schism between Lutherans and Calvinists.

A sad failing of these Protestant splinter groups was often their intolerance toward one another. To the extreme type of Puritan or Independent even Presbyterians came to be regarded as verging upon papacy. As Milton put it tersely, "Presbyter is but old priest writ large". It followed that some of the minor sects, fleeing across the Atlantic from the religious intolerance of Europe, found in New England an even worse intolerance established there by some other sect, who had got there before them.

The states of Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and

Delaware all owed their birth to this urge for Protestants to throw off the yoke of other types of Protestants who had already dominated Massachusetts. The Quakers, for similar reasons, founded a home of their own in Pennsylvania. Maryland, founded by Roman Catholics under Lord Baltimore, extended a tolerance to other denominations, quite unknown in some of the Protestant settlements. New York and New Jersey, when taken from the Dutch, rapidly filled with English settlers, driven there by a longing for freedom from persecution by any sect at all. Thus it came about that these two regions earned an early reputation for religious tolerance which at that period was rare indeed in any part of Christendom.

To understand fully the eventual breakaway of the thirteen colonies from British rule it is important to bear in mind these peculiar factors which attended their early history.

The migrants, who poured in their thousands across the Atlantic between 1600 and 1688, were mainly religious or social refugees. They made their own arrangements for the journey, often in face of official discouragement, almost invariably at any rate without official help. This meant that, as a rule, the settlers were men and women of sturdily independent character. It meant also that many took with them memories of the old country which were not complimentary or pleasant. During the years of England's troubles—her plague, her fire of London, her civil war, and her temperamental Stuart kings—the transatlantic settlers were left very much to themselves. Consequently, when at last at the turn of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries the mother country was able to resume her interest in the transatlantic offspring, the colonists had already become in their outlook almost another nation, or rather perhaps thirteen separate nations, for they had little use for one another till united by their common quarrel with England.

Before tackling that sad chapter in British imperial history let us study the happier narrative of the Anglo-French struggle for North America. It is a story which every modern American should ponder before indulging in abuse or contempt for the British historical record. If the early New Englanders and Virginians had been left to fight their own battles, it is extremely doubtful whether today such a country as the United States would exist. Whatever nation occupied that vast space, it would not have been an English-speaking nation but a French or Spanish speaking one. Americans owe their right to be a nation to the British, who fought at Blenheim and in Marlborough's other battles, and to the later British troops who took Quebec and Fort Duquesne.

Above all, Americans owe their existence as a nation to the British sailors, who wrested the mastery of the Atlantic from the French and the Spaniards.

Like most head-on collisions between deep-seated but mutually antagonistic human causes the Anglo-French rivalry festered for many years before it came to a head. The inevitability of a clash became obvious in the outposts long before the rulers in London or Paris realized that there could be no peace by negotiation when conflicting interests of such vital importance were at stake. The two home governments, it is true, realized fairly early that serious bones of contention existed. But their eyes were set upon Europe, where questions such as the dynastic claims of Bourbons or Hapsburgs, or the independence of the Low Countries, or the navigation of the River Scheldt, seemed to be the things that mattered.

All these certainly were things that mattered very much because in effect they raised the question of whether France was to be permitted to dominate the continent of Europe.

But they were matters which could be settled, and were in fact temporarily settled, by a judicious mixture of war and diplomacy. Clausewitz pointed out that war (in his day) was a continuance of diplomacy by more forcible means. Nations rarely fought in those more civilized days absolutely to the bitter end—till one or both belligerents faced utter destruction.

So it came about that the earlier Anglo-French wars of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries ended in peace negotiations which left neither side exhausted, but left the final issue to be retried later. The "winner" in these limited wars gained certain dynastic or territorial advantages. Provinces or cities were surrendered by the "loser" as pawns in a long game. Very often they changed ownership in the reverse direction as part of some later peace treaty. But, regarded as a series of moves in a huge chess game, the combined result of all this fighting and peace making was the achievement of Great Britain's long-term aim—to prevent France from becoming so strong on the Continent that she would be able to force a passage of arms across the Straits of Dover.

Among these limited wars can be listed the following:

1689-1697. Issues mainly dynastic (i.e., French king's persistent support for the Stuart cause). Fought mainly in the Low Countries with French-backed rebellions in Scotland and Ireland. Battles—Killiecrankie, Londonderry (siege), Enniskillen (siege) and the Boyne. In Belgium-Steenkerke, Landen, and the storming of Namur. At sea, La Hogue.

This war ended in the negotiated *Treaty of Ryswick* (1697) which gained for the British important dynastic terms but no territorial gains. The importance of overseas possessions was as yet hardly considered at all.

1700-1713. War of the Spanish Succession. Issues again mainly dynastic (i.e., to prevent France from becoming dominant by union with Spain). Fought again mainly in the Low Countries and at sea. Battles—Blenheim (Bavaria), Ramillies, Oudenarde, Malplaquet (Belgium). Capture of Gibraltar. War ended by *Treaty of Utrecht (1713)* which gained for the British *(a)* defeat of French plans for union with Spain *(b)* permanent retention of Gibraltar *(c)* the right of "Asiento" (i.e., permission for British ships to trade with Spanish America) and *(d)* Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. It will be noticed from these terms that British statesmen were slowly realizing the importance of maritime trade and the importance of naval bases. The idea of empire was sprouting. For here in the Treaty of Utrecht we find for the first time an important transfer of *transatlantic* territory. France was obliged to cede to Great Britain Newfoundland and Nova Scotia.

1740-1748. War of the Austrian Succession. Yet another dynastic war to prevent a collapse of Austria and a resultant French domination. Rather an indecisive war, ended by the *Treaty of Aachen* (or Aix-la-Chapelle) of 1748. Historians usually describe this treaty as a colourless affair by which both sides handed back their territorial gains of the former war. And so it was, as far as concerned territorial gains in Central Europe. But there was a significant exception to this restitution of former gains, which seems to indicate that by now the British Government had fully awakened to the importance of overseas possessions. The naval station at Gibraltar was *not* handed back to Spain. Neither were Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, ceded by France in 1713, handed back to her. Furthermore, the island of Cape Breton, adjacent to these territories, which happened to have been captured by Great Britain during the war now ending, was not returned to France under the Treaty of Aachen.

But, taken as a whole, the Treaty of Aachen was certainly an indecisive end to an indecisive war. It must have been abundantly clear to all concerned that neither war nor treaty had finally settled anything at all. The question of British or French supremacy in North America and in India had yet to be fought out.

The final showdown could not long be delayed because in both North America and in India fighting had never completely ceased.

In North America the French must have realized that they would have to act quickly and drastically if they were not to be ousted completely. The recent British acquisitions of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and now Cape Breton, threatened to cut Quebec and all French settlements in the St. Lawrence basin completely off from

the Atlantic. There was only one thing to be done, and done quickly.

In 1748, the very year of the Aachen treaty, which was supposed to have restored Anglo-French peace, the French in Canada gave short notice to all English settlers, west of the Ohio River, to get out. The settlers were not the type of men to accept such orders meekly and desultory fighting at once broke out. The French suffered from the grave disadvantage of disparity in numbers, for in all their North American settlements there were not two hundred thousand white men, whereas the population of the English colonies, despite lack of governmental support, had leaped to nearly two millions. Massachusetts had increased its white population during the eleven years 1629-1640 from three hundred up to fourteen thousand.

But against this numerical handicap the French enjoyed vigorous official backing. They had founded the city of New Orleans that same year (1748) and were determined at all costs to unite that maritime outlet with their Canadian possessions by ensuring that the River Mississippi and its tributaries should for ever remain French. They built forts to protect the waterway.

Three of these forts played important parts in the coming Anglo-French struggle. They were Fort Niagara near the Falls, Ticonderoga, where the Hudson River flows out of Lake Champlain, and Fort Duquesne, where Pittsburgh City now stands. In 1754 a force of militia from Virginia, commanded by Major George Washington (then of course a British subject) set out to attack Fort Duquesne. They were forced to surrender at Great Meadows and Washington was taken prisoner. Next year a second attempt was made by a larger force under General Braddock. This column included some regular troops.

They were ambushed by French and Indians in dense woods about seven miles short of Duquesne. Braddock had four horses shot under him and was himself killed. Of all his staff only one was unwounded and about two-thirds of his troops were killed or wounded.

At this time England and France were not yet officially at war, but both were shipping reinforcements across the Atlantic. The sham peace could not last long. In the spring of 1756 a squadron carrying French troops was intercepted by Admiral Boscawen, who captured two French ships after a fight. This naval engagement may therefore be said to have touched off the Seven Years War, though official declaration only set a seal upon unofficial Anglo-French hostilities, which had been raging for some years, not only in North America but in India, too.

This Seven Years War, from the point of view of British imperial history, far surpassed in importance the earlier Anglo-French wars, listed a few pages back. It may justifiably be called the foundation

stone of the British Empire, for by it was decided the question whether Great Britain or France should take the lead in empire building. This war made both Canada and India British and not French.

Like most of our British wars this one started with a run of unmitigated British disasters, due almost entirely to stinting of the defence budget during peace. In Canada, a brilliant French general, Montcalm, captured British posts at Oswego and Fort William Henry and successfully defended Fort Ticonderoga against General Abercromby with a vastly superior army. In India, as we shall see in the next chapter, the British cause suffered several reverses till the tide was turned by the genius of Clive.

On the continent of Europe the British army played, as in most continental wars, a numerically minor part alongside the massive conscript armies of her allies. At first our only ally was Prussia, with Austria, France, Sweden, and Russia all ranged on the other side. Not for the last time in our history fate had linked Great Britain with an uncongenial partner. For Prussia at that time was a rapacious *parvenu* kingdom, ruled by the unscrupulous and ambitious Frederick II. As a further complication the kingdom of Hanover was at that time linked to Great Britain by their common allegiance to one monarch. This influenced British strategy and led to the first disaster of the land war in Europe.

The Duke of Cumberland, victor of Culloden and nicknamed "Butcher" because of the severity used in crushing the Jacobites of the "'45", was given command of a British expeditionary force, sent to defend the kingdom of Hanover. He was outmanœuvred by the French Marshal Saxe. His army, forced back against the North Sea coast near Stade, was obliged to accept the capitulation of Kloster-Zeven.

At sea an even worse blow marked the first year of official war. Minorca had been a British naval base since 1713 and was the key to sea power in the Mediterranean, as Malta became later. It fell to a French combined operation partly, it was said, because a British fleet under Admiral Byng displayed a lack of offensive spirit. The unfortunate admiral was court martialled and shot, "*pour encourager les autres*" as the French cynic Voltaire said.

But one scapegoat was insufficient to quell the storm of indignation that swept through England on account of the general mismanagement of the war. The government was turned out of office and, among the new ministers, there came to the fore William Pitt, the Elder—one of those outstanding figures that desperate times often bring to light amid a welter of third-rate mediocrities.

The genius of Pitt (later made Earl of Chatham) lay in his realization of two things—first that the possession of an overseas empire

was more important for Great Britain than the swinging pendulum of continental rivalries, and secondly that the key to an overseas empire lay in command of the seas.

He admitted, as every British statesman must admit, that Great Britain can never remain indifferent to the course of events in continental Europe. But he realized the value of a sense of proportion. In the war now raging on the Continent he saw the British rôle as that of a financer of continental allies and an encourager of continental coalitions. It was folly to waste the resources of a small island kingdom in maintaining huge armies on the continental scale, while there were allies willing enough to fight the land campaign if someone provided them with the money and equipment to keep their great armies in the field. A small British expeditionary force must of course fight alongside these massive allies, if only to disprove the jibe that "England fights her continental wars to the last drop of blood of her continental allies". Pitt saw that a small but professionally excellent army was all that Great Britain needed to pull her weight on the Continent. All the rest of her energy should be devoted to sea power with sufficient overseas armies to reap the fruits of sea power and hold them.

Once in possession of sea power Pitt saw that quite small British armies could win colonial campaigns. They would have an uninterrupted flow of reinforcements, ammunition, and military supplies to keep them in action while their adversaries the French would receive little or nothing in the way of seaborne support.

With characteristic drive Pitt reorganized the structure of the whole British war effort to fit his conception of correct strategy. This brought him into bad odour with the king, whose Hanoverian sentiments revolted against Pitt's treatment of the continental war as a diversion of British fighting power. Pitt was thrown out of office, for in those days the king still had the last word on who should be his ministers. But so insistent was popular opinion in favour of the one statesman who could run the war, that the king soon had to allow Pitt to take charge once more, though under a compromise arrangement which left the Duke of Newcastle as the ostensible premier while Pitt had the power and did the work.

The effect of his leadership and drive became apparent in 1759, three years after the official war had started, when the tide of British success suddenly began to flow. At Minden in Hanover the small but highly trained British contingent of seven regiments, fighting with the Prussian army, played a leading rôle in the crushing defeat of the French, thus turning the continental situation from the brink of disaster to stability.

At sea far-reaching successes were achieved. At Lagos on the Portuguese coast and at Quiberon Bay in Brittany the British navy

won resounding victories which firmly secured Great Britain, for the rest of the Seven Years War, in complete mastery of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. The effect of this upon the land campaigns in North America and in India was decisive.

Montcalm, for all his brilliance as a military commander, was gradually weighed down by numbers and armament. He could not be reinforced from France. His English opponents could get all that they needed. Fort Duquesne was the first French post to fall. It was renamed Pittsburgh in honour of the architect of victory. Louisburg in Cape Breton Island was captured by a combined operation. Ticonderoga, where Montcalm had repulsed Abercromby the previous year, was captured by General Amherst. Fort Niagara was the next to go. In September (1759) a British fleet entered the St. Lawrence, carrying an army of about 8,000 under General Wolfe. Montcalm had drawn back his forces and concentrated them for the defence of Quebec, a place of great natural defensive strength.

After several days of fruitless reconnaissance to find a weak point in Montcalm's dispositions, Wolfe, a daring tactician of thirty-three, adopted a plan of attack in defiance of almost all the orthodox rules of battle. There was a steep and narrow path from the water's edge up a cliff on to the Heights of Abraham, a plateau which would give Wolfe's small army enough space to deploy for battle. The advantage was that these heights lay to the west of Quebec, whereas Montcalm's camp lay to the east and beyond the St. Charles River. Surprise was also possible because of the unlikelihood of an attack by such a route.

On the other hand Wolfe ran the risk of being counter-attacked while only a part of his army had emerged from the defile.

It was a form of attack very likely to end in disaster if things go wrong, but promising decisive success if they go as hoped. Other famous examples of this kind of battle are Jena and Lord Roberts' capture of the Peiwar Kotal. To pull it off is the mark of an extremely courageous general and of highly disciplined troops in good morale.

Wolfe won the success which he deserved, but was killed in the moment of victory. Montcalm also was killed in the battle.

It was a battle that decided the fate of North America. The French hold on Canada was ended. No longer were the English settlers of the Atlantic coast threatened with encirclement. When the Seven Years War was ended by the *Treaty of Paris* (1763) Great Britain was confirmed in possession of all French territory east of the Mississippi besides the province of Canada itself. All this was won by hard fighting on land, as at Quebec, but far more it was won by British ships and sailors.

4

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE
1763-1783

THE Seven Years War was an expensive business both for victors and defeated. The days had passed when any merchant ship could serve in the line of battle merely by having a few guns mounted in her. Battleships were now specialized craft of little or no use in trade. Similarly on land the ever growing complications of infantry movements on the battlefield made it necessary to maintain standing armies of highly skilled musketeers instead of the raw peasant levies of earlier wars. Great Britain in particular, after her extensive hirings of German mercenaries and her lavish financial aid to continental allies, began to feel the pinch very quickly.

For her, fighting did not cease on signature of the Peace of Paris. Wolfe's great victory at Quebec had presented her, it is true, with a vast extension of territory in Canada and the Middle West. But with this new territory came new problems and responsibilities. British statesmanship decided that the British king's new French Canadian subjects must be given a fair deal if peace and good order were to be established. Some may think that the treatment of French colonists was excessively generous. It was certainly unusual for those times. French settlers were left in possession of their lands and French laws were retained except in a few instances, where the settlers definitely requested substitution of British law—as for example trial by jury. The Roman Catholic Church was granted special privileges. Its property and the right to levy tithes and other dues from its believers was fully confirmed. The French language continued to be taught in schools and was recognized as one of the official languages together with English. French customs in their entirety were protected to such an extent that after the French Revolution many aspects of French Canadian life remained more traditionally French than those of the mother country. Finally, as an outlet for future expansion of the French community in North America, a large tract of hitherto undeveloped country to the west of the Appalachians was proclaimed by the British Government to be henceforward a part of the province of Quebec.

This generous treatment of the French settlers aroused anger

among the settlers of English descent living in the coastal strip east of the Appalachians. For many years pioneers from these English communities had been thrusting westward toward the rivers Ohio and Mississippi. Already quite a flourishing business had sprung up among the dealers in real estate beyond the Appalachians. These hard-boiled businessmen saw their prospects of quick fortunes being endangered by the British Government's action in handing back land to the French.

British treatment of the Indians caused even stronger resentment among the English-speaking settlers. It was part of the British plan to deal fairly with the Indian tribes, as they were doing with the French settlers. But, before their good intentions became known to the Indians, the latter rose in rebellion against the transfer of their homelands from French rule to British. The French, being principally interested in the fur trade and being few in numbers, had lived fairly amicably among the Indian tribes and had not attempted to drive them out of their lands. By contrast the English-speaking setttlers had, from the very first, treated the original owners of the country as vermin to be exterminated or driven ever farther and farther westward.

To protect the Indians from further exploitation the British Government, immediately upon signature of the Treaty of Paris in 1763, had issued a Proclamation forbidding any further settlement by white men to the west of the Appalachian mountains. All country beyond this line was made into an Indian reservation with the exception of the portion allotted, as stated above, to the French-speaking province of Quebec. In taking this somewhat drastic course the British Government appear to have been actuated partly by disappointment and annoyance at the very poor response given by the English-speaking settlers to an appeal for volunteers to assist the regular troops in maintaining order in the newly acquired Ohio and Mississippi territories.

The aforesaid Indian rising was endangering the lives and homes of many of these settlers, who had already penetrated beyond the "Proclamation line". It seemed reasonable for the British Government to ask the settlers for help in protecting these endangered compatriots. However, response from the settlers was so poor that a considerable reinforcement of regular troops had to be sent to North America and maintained there at the British taxpayers' expense for the purpose of protecting these same settlers, whose truculent conduct toward the Indians had been a primary cause of the emergency, and who now were scarcely prepared to lift a finger to avert it.

For there could be no doubt that the sudden outburst of Indian hostility had been brought about by their transfer from French to British rule. The French had succeeded in living on friendly terms

with the Indians (except for the Iroquois) whereas the only form of British rule which the Indians had hitherto experienced had been the exterminatory policy of the English-speaking settlers.

It was at this point that the ugly question of taxation arose—that question of taxation without representation which is almost universally quoted as being the chief cause of the rebellion among the colonists. It was most certainly *one* of the causes of friction, but by no means the only one. Though the whole world has heard of the Boston Tea Party and similar demonstrations of the colonists' annoyance with the fiscal policy of the mother country, an even greater and earlier dissatisfaction had been the mother country's Indian policy, as promulgated in the Proclamation of 1763.

In almost all human quarrels there are faults on both sides and a certain degree of justification on both sides. This quarrel between the government in London and the settlers in New England was no exception to this general rule.

The home government seems to have been justified in trying to make the settlers contribute financially to their own defence against the Indians as well as toward the vast costs of the recent world war. The very existence of these colonies in any other form than that of French possessions had depended upon Wolfe's victory at Quebec. It had depended too upon the fighting in Europe, which had tied down French armies, who might otherwise have been sent to North America. Above all it had depended upon the British navy, which had allowed British troops to cross the ocean but had prevented French troops from doing so. It is no exaggeration to say that the independence of the future United States of America was won by British sailors in Quiberon Bay.

All these facts were clear to Pitt, George Grenville, and other British statesmen of that time. They were probably equally clear to public opinion in the United Kingdom as a whole. People there were strengthened in their feeling that the settlers ought to be made to pay their share by stories, current in England at that time, about how few of the settlers had volunteered for the Indian wars. "Why should we pay to protect these people if they won't lift a finger to defend themselves?" was the view of many an Englishman. Whether or not this accusation against the settler community as a whole was fair or grossly exaggerated is today of minor importance. The story was generally believed.

The same holds good of rumours, also current at that time, concerning the extent to which the settlers had traded with the enemy during the Seven Years War. The fact that they did so cannot be denied. The local governments of Massachusetts and other colonies formally protested on several occasions against British actions aimed at preventing such trade. Here again the disgust, felt by inhabitants

of Great Britain, against what must have seemed to be rank disloyalty, is quite understandable. To those at home, closer to the European war, this mercenary outlook of fellow countrymen (for they were still fellow countrymen, though they lived across the Atlantic) seemed contemptible, if not worse.

In short the quarrel, like many quarrels, grew big upon a diet of mutual misunderstandings between two branches of the English-speaking world. Its growth was deliberately fanned by a comparatively small political faction, known as "radicals", who, from the very first, believed in and worked for the independence of the colonies. During the twelve years (1763-1775) while early grumbling grew into open war, intimidation was freely used by these extremists to "persuade" loyal settlers to collaborate in widening the growing rift. For antagonism to the home government and its policies was by no means so general among the settlers as modern Americans are inclined to believe and teach.

The twelve years of growing crisis may be divided into two phases. From 1763 to 1769 there still remained some hope that agreement might have been reached. The two big causes of discontent—prohibition of Indian exploitation and the new taxation—only affected certain sections of the settler community. Those whose loyalty to King George remained unshaken by any personal sense of grievance, were at that time subjected to no fiercer forms of pressure than an intensive propaganda drive by the radicals. The slogan at first was a call to everybody to stand together to protect the interests of the few who felt aggrieved by the new policies of the London government.

Toward the end of this period propagandist argument gave place gradually to thinly veiled threats against any who showed unwillingness to participate in the campaign for boycotting British goods, which the radicals were in process of organizing.

But, in spite of argument and threats, large numbers of settlers still hoped and believed that the points of disagreement between themselves and the mother country could be, ought to be, and would be, amicably adjusted. The partial repeal in 1767 of the Stamp Act and some other particularly obnoxious features of the Grenville legislation went a long way toward encouraging this give-and-take attitude among the loyalists and the more moderate thinkers. This was the moment when the home government committed its one fatal error by its neglect of what we call today public relations.

There seems reason to believe that, if only the London government had, at this stage if not earlier, taken the settlers completely into its confidence, explaining fully its reasons for wishing to impose the new taxes, the comparatively small radical element might have failed to gain support for its secessionist plans. This reconciliation

between home country and colonists might have been, and most probably would have been, only a postponement of an inevitable separation. In the long run the thirteen colonies might have gone the way that other white dominions of the British Empire have followed in recent years. There would, however, have been one significant difference, affecting the ultimate fate of the British Empire. The separation of the thirteen transatlantic communities from the mother country would not have given birth, as it did, to a nation, many of whose citizens inherited, *and have to this day persisted in*, an almost pathological antagonism to the British way of life and to everything British.

But reconciliation was not to be. Though Burke and, to a great extent Pitt, had the breadth of mind to appreciate the settlers' point of view as well as that of the mother country, King George III, Lord North, and most of the London authorities obstinately failed to respond in any helpful way to genuine efforts by moderates among the settlers to close the widening rift. The king, especially, thought of them and spoke of them only as "rebels".

From 1769 onward all hopes of reconciliation faded rapidly, partly owing to this unrelenting attitude of the king and cabinet in London but mainly owing to the tactics of intimidation used by the radical faction in America. As is usual in such situations, the conduct of extremists at either end of the controversy tended to pull waverers in one direction or the other, rendering it ever more difficult for "middle of the road" men to continue their struggles for a peaceful solution.

Ostracism toward settlers who persisted in loyalty to the old country became progressively more savage, soon turning to acts of violence against the persons or property of loyalists. By 1774 many of those who stood out against the boycott of British goods, were being tarred and feathered by gangs of radical terrorists.

It is only fair to admit that this extremity of intimidation culminated from a crescendo of hostile acts by both sides. The radicals started their campaign of violence by acts of sabotage against British property with the double purpose of rendering reconciliation impossible and of making the revolutionary movement appear more widespread and more important than it really was at that time. Thus, in 1772 a gang of saboteurs boarded the revenue cutter *Gaspée* in Naragansett Bay near Providence, and burned her to the waterline. This flagrant act against a ship of the king's service achieved wide publicity among England's enemies on the Continent of Europe and they began to watch the growing trouble with keen interest, waiting for a chance to profit by it.

In December 1773 the famous Boston Tea Party caused an even greater stir. A party of saboteurs, disguised as Mohawk Indians,

boarded some merchant ships in Boston harbour and threw the entire cargoes of tea overboard. This loss to British trade, valued at about £18,000, drove the London government to stern measures of punishment, which became known in American history books as "The Intolerable Acts". There is no doubt that some of these measures were unduly severe. One of them, the closure of Boston harbour to all shipping for a long period, had in fact the very undesirable effect of creating among the thirteen colonies a solidarity which had till then been lacking. The neighbouring ports, both in Massachusetts and other coastal colonies, rallied to help the merchants and port authorities of Boston through the difficulties imposed by closure of their harbour. The sense of unity thus created became a valuable source of strength to the coming rebellion.

Indignation against The Intolerable Acts brought about a representative meeting of the thirteen colonies, known as the Continental Congress—important as being the first assembly of the future Congress of the United States. This assembly formed an Association for enforcement of a boycott of British goods. By the beginning of 1775 this boycott had so severely damaged the interests of British merchants and ship owners that strong pressure was put by them upon the British Government to bring the boycott to an end. By now the situation of loyalist settlers was being made intolerable by intimidation and victimization of most vicious types.

Apart from tarring and feathering, by way of personal intimidation, loyalists suffered financially through the issue of new paper money. This was one of the acts of the Continental Congress. The new money became known as continental dollars and it is an indication of its speedy depreciation in real value that the expression "not worth a continental" soon became a byword in American slang. Loyalist settlers, foreseeing the time when they might have to seek new homes within the British Empire, naturally wished to accumulate British money of real value instead of the dubious new stuff. But pressure was put upon the settler community in general to take the new money into circulation with the result that loyalist settlers had to accept continentals as payment for debts owed to them or else get nothing at all. Many were ruined by this financial swindle. It is to the lasting credit of the loyalists that so many of them obstinately refused to succumb to these pressures. They were doomed to suffer even worse persecution during the war for independence itself and worse still when the triumphant rebels turned upon those who had remained loyal to the British Crown in spite of all. Thousands of unfortunates had to abandon all that they possessed, other than easily portable property, and exist as refugees round New York and other ports until they could be transported in British ships to territory still under British rule. The great majority of them

settled in New Brunswick, where they were welcomed and kindly treated.

Fresh grants of land were made to them, and the British Government did all that it could to obtain from the newly formed American Government compensation for the lost property of the loyalists and payment of debts, owed to them by other settlers who had now become Americans. It is a sad fact that many of these debts were unscrupulously repudiated.

But nothing seems to have broken the spirit of these gallant exiles, who called themselves with justifiable pride the United Empire Loyalists, a title which King George III was graciously pleased to confirm as their right.

To return now to the narrative of the growing rift. A partial repeal of the unpopular Stamp Act did little to calm the malcontents, perhaps because this act of appeasement was coupled with reiteration of the home government's claim that it still maintained its right to impose such taxation if it thought fit. By now the unrest was arousing keen interest in France and Spain. Both countries had cause to regret the terms of the peace treaty (Peace of Paris, 1763) which had ended the Seven Years War. France in particular, under the able statesmanship of the Duc de Choiseul, had started preparing for a war of revenge against England almost as soon as the Paris treaty had been signed. Special attention was devoted to rebuilding the French navy with the intention of challenging British naval supremacy as soon as possible. Consequently, when the opportunity came in 1778, the French possessed eighty-four line-of-battle ships as compared with the forty possessed in 1763. By combining these eighty-four with the sixty possessed by Spain (who was then, thanks to Choiseul's diplomacy, in very close alliance with France) the two Bourbon monarchies had a material preponderance over the British navy owing to the superior size and gunpower of the French and Spanish ships over the British hundred and fifty ships-of-the-line.

France and Spain, however, did not wait till 1778 before taking advantage of the North American situation. When Louis XVI succeeded in May 1774, just about the time that the American crisis was approaching breaking point, he made a speech to his ministers, outlining the foreign policy that he intended France to pursue. Referring to Great Britain's quarrel with her North American settlers he said:

"Meddle adroitly in the affairs of the British colonies; give the insurgent colonists the means of obtaining supplies of war . . . and get everything ready for an invasion of England so as to force her to concentrate her forces, and thus restrict her means of resistance at the extremities of the empire."

These words of the new French king were merely his confirmation of something which had been going on for an appreciable time. A supply of arms and ammunition had been reaching North America from French and Spanish sources and General Gage, the British governor of Massachusetts, had been sending military search parties to various localities wherever his intelligence services suspected the settlers to be accumulating dumps of munitions. By this time (early 1774) the First Continental Congress had organized a force of volunteers, known as minute men, whose task it was to be ready, at a minute's notice, to turn out in defence of the hidden dumps. The whole country was in a state of tension, only requiring a spark to start open war. Gage, the governor, had refused to meet the settlers' leaders or representatives and had shut himself up in Boston, as though it were a beleaguered city in an enemy's country. His reconnoitring and punitive columns moved through the surrounding country with full warlike precautions.

In April 1775 the inevitable clash occurred. There had already been an incident in February when a British party raided Salem in search of gunpowder. Bloodshed then was only averted by the fact that it was Sunday, so that the ministers calmed the people down. But in April there was no such saving grace. Another British column, on its way to seize an arms dump at Concord, had to pass through the village of Lexington, where their passage was barred by a small group of minute men. The British officer ordered the Americans to disperse, but shots were fired by both sides before they did so.

A few casualties were caused—the first blood of the war—and the column marched on to Concord and destroyed the dump of war stores. Their return march to Boston was bitterly opposed and harassed.

It was as though a hornet's nest had been disturbed by the little skirmish at Lexington. Messengers had ridden far and wide to rouse reinforcements of minute men with the result that the column had to run the gauntlet of snipers from every yard of cover along their route. Complete disaster was only averted by arrival of a rescue party from Boston. Even so, the reinforced British were closely pressed and harassed till they came under covering fire from warships along the quays of Boston. By next morning all landward exits were blockaded by armed settlers. The siege of Boston and the war had both begun.

The British civil authorities and the army command were both caught unprepared by the sudden outbreak of fighting, though they certainly ought to have anticipated trouble of that kind at almost any moment. They were probably lulled into a sense of false security by the fact that, although public opinion among the settlers made no secret at all of its determination to be freed from domination by the parliament in London, this same public opinion still mani-

fested an unshaken loyalty to the king in person, a remarkable resemblance to the Anglo-Rhodesian situation of 1965-66.

This remarkable distinction on the settlers' part between their king, whom for a long time they respected and regarded as their lawful ruler, and the London Parliament, for whom they had no use at all, was exemplified in many ways during the early part of the war. For instance, the first flag designed for the United States bore the same stripes as the present American flag. But, instead of the stars, it bore the crosses of Saint George and Saint Andrew interlocked (which was the Union Jack of that period, the cross of Saint Patrick only being added in 1800). It was only after the Declaration of Independence in 1776—when King George III had stubbornly refused to answer, or even acknowledge a loyal and humble petition addressed to him by his North American subjects—it was only then that they abandoned the Union Jack altogether and no longer regarded themselves as the king's subjects. Thus the first year of the American War of Independence, curious as it may seem, was a war against the London Parliament only (whose jurisdiction they refused to recognize) and *not*, in the minds of the rebels themselves, a rebellion against the king's majesty. It is hardly surprising perhaps that British authorities in America, whether civil or military, were for a while perplexed as to what kind of a war they had to fight.

Be the cause of their unpreparedness what it may, they were certainly caught at a disadvantage throughout the country.

The immediate effect of Lexington and Concord was the general and partially spontaneous rush to arms of settlers all over the thirteen colonies. Those within reach of Boston converged upon the town, thus besieging General Gage and his troops within a ring of hostile suburbs. Among other points occupied by the rebels was a low mound, only about a hundred feet above sea level, which commanded the entrance of Boston Harbour. Its name was then Breed's Hill, but later it became better known to fame as Bunker Hill.

Meanwhile British officials and small detachments of troops were being surrounded and made prisoners unless they happened to be near enough to the coast to embark in British ships. On May 10th a force of settlers from Vermont surprised and captured the fort of Ticonderoga, at the southern end of Lake Champlain. This was a place of great strategic importance, because it commanded the string of small lakes, which, with the Hudson River, provided an easy line of communication from Canada to New York. It was soon recaptured by the British.

On 17th June the beleagured British in Boston made an assault in force against the enemy entrenched on Bunker Hill. The attack was made frontally, after crossing the intervening water by boats, apparently without any attempt at surprise. The Americans held

their fire till the attackers arrived within a hundred feet of their trenches and then a volley decimated the British and sent the survivors down the hill in confusion. A second and third frontal attack took place and the hill was captured, but at a cost of 1,100 casualties out of a total assault force of 2,500. This weakened the Boston garrison so severely that Gage was soon afterwards obliged to evacuate the city. In his dispatch he showed clearly that the attack on Bunker Hill had been planned on the assumption that the defenders were a mere rabble who would not stand and fight. Events such as Ticonderoga and Bunker Hill at any rate did something to awaken the British authorities from their complacency.

Indeed, during the first few months of fighting, there was great confusion of thought in the United Kingdom itself concerning the realities of the situation in America. In many ways this must have borne a remarkable resemblance to the Ulster crisis of 1914 and perhaps even to the Rhodesian situation of 1965. A strong school of thought in England sympathized with the transatlantic settlers in their quarrel with the London Parliament. It was held by many Englishmen to be a scandalous and abhorrent thing that British troops should be sent to fight against their own kith and kin. Many regular army officers sent in their papers rather than consent to be used against fellow countrymen. When news of the killing of settlers at Lexington first reached England many houses displayed mourning. Public meetings were held in some of the chief cities of England, deploring the treatment of the settlers as "enemies".

But news of the heavy losses at Bunker Hill embittered public opinion at home. King George himself received this news just before a final appeal by the settlers reached him. It had been most carefully worded and its tone was that of loyal subjects petitioning their king. But the slaughter on Bunker Hill had its effect. The king refused even to answer the petition. Next month (August 1775) a royal proclamation denounced the American cause as open rebellion and called upon all loyal subjects in Great Britain to report cases of people in the home country who were aiding the rebels by word or deed. At the same time orders were sent to British warships on the Atlantic station to conduct full scale war against coastal towns in rebel hands.

It was easy enough to intensify the naval war against the rebels, because it could be conducted with relatively few fighting men, as compared with the manpower needs of land war. The crews of the king's ships, moreover, were out of touch with public opinion at home and unaffected by it. It was another matter to raise volunteers for the land war while public opinion remained dubious as to the justice or morality of the king's war against his transatlantic subjects. Consequently, though the London Parliament authorized the

raising of 25,000 additional troops for the suppression of the rebellion, more than half of them had to be obtained from Germany. When one reads of British armies being defeated by the American settlers it is only fair to bear in mind that these forces consisted mainly of Hanoverian or Hessian peasants with no interest in the quarrel or the faintest knowledge of the issues involved. Even the English and Scottish soldiers were at first inclined to be half-hearted in their hostility to the "enemy".

By contrast the destruction wrought by naval bombardment of the coastal towns had the effect of solidifying American public opinion in favour of an outright struggle for complete independence, cost what it might. The king's contemptuous treatment of the final petition, which Penn had carried personally to London, swept away the last vestiges of hope that a reconciliation could ever be accomplished. The lot of the remaining obstinate loyalists became more unpleasant than ever. The thirteen colonies now contained a population almost unanimous in its support for independence. On 4th July, 1776, after many draft versions had been discussed and amended, that historic document, the Declaration of Independence, was formally agreed and adopted by Congress.

It is noteworthy that this document, in strong contrast to all foregoing utterances of the American people, attacked the king personally for all that had gone wrong. The London Parliament was ignored. The pious fiction of a good King of America, led astray by bad advisers in London, was dropped for ever.

The first year of the war was indecisive. There were defeats and successes on both sides. George Washington particularly distinguished himself for his generalship at the Battle of Trenton on Christmas night, 1776. But it soon became clear that the Hudson River would exercise an important influence on the whole strategy of the war.

The British plan was to seize and hold New York and New Jersey, thus separating the New England settlers from those of Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. New York and New Jersey were populated largely by settlers of Dutch and Swedish origin, who were believed by British intelligence services to be lukewarm toward the idea of independence. Secondly the rivers Hudson and Delaware offered estuaries that were favourable to British naval action and to the landing of reinforcements from Europe. And thirdly the River Hudson itself, with the lakes to the north of it not only facilitated secure connections with Canada (where there were British forces) but also offered the possibility of using the British navy to isolate the New England states from Virginia and the south.

Admiral Mahan, in his book *The Influence of Sea Power upon History* severely criticized the British high command for neglecting

this opportunity of exploiting its naval supremacy in this way. But the admiral's own account of subsequent events shows that the British did indeed fully appreciate the importance of the Hudson River and Lake Champlain waterway. It was, in fact, the pivotal aim of the British strategic plan that the army in Canada should combine with the expeditionary force which had captured New York so that together they would close the Hudson valley and thus cut the New England states off from the rest. Whether a greater use of warships in the Hudson might have ensured the success of this plan seems doubtful. Admiral Mahan himself queried the feasibility of using sailing ships thus in the narrow waters of the Hudson. In actual fact Sir Henry Clinton, marching up the Hudson from New York to contact and relieve Burgoyne's force from Canada, had great difficulty in subduing the riverline forts which the Americans had constructed between West Point and Albany.

Sir Edward Creasy in his *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World* has narrated lucidly and in detail the story of this Hudson River campaign of 1777 which culminated in the surrender of Burgoyne's army at Saratoga. It seems that the fatal British mistake was not so much a failure to use sea power but a failure to concentrate their available forces on the main objective. Simultaneously with the Hudson River campaign they also struck at Philadelphia by sending a large part of the New York forces round by sea to Chesapeake Bay. By this stupid diversion (prompted by political rather than strategic considerations) they deprived Clinton of the fighting strength which would almost certainly have enabled him to reach Burgoyne in time.

A secondary mistake was the employment of Indians by Burgoyne. Despite his efforts to control them these savages committed such barbarities that every American settler within miles of the Hudson realized that he must fight or see his wife and children scalped.

Creasy rightly included Saratoga among his fifteen decisive battles though the forces on each side were only a few thousand. The news of this British defeat provided just the opportunity for which England's European enemies had been waiting. France and Spain declared war, followed soon after by Holland. The combined fleets of these three, allied to American privateersmen, proved too much for the naval strength of Great Britain. What the sea power of France, Spain, and Holland meant to American hopes of independence has been clearly stated in the words of Admiral Mahan—himself an American.

"Will it be too much for American pride," he asked, "to admit that, had France refused to contest the control of the sea with England, the latter would have been able to reduce the Atlantic seaboard? Let us not kick down the ladder by which we mounted,

nor refuse to acknowledge what our fathers felt in their hour of trial."

If further testimony be needed to support the words of this distinguished American patriot, it can be found in the circumstances attending the surrender of General Cornwallis and his 4,500 troops at Yorktown. He had taken his force to that place after a successful but exhausting campaign in Virginia with the intention of replenishing his strength with supplies and reinforcements from a British fleet, which had been ordered to meet him there. Instead of this fleet under Admiral Graves he found there a French fleet under Admiral De Grasse. With superior forces under Washington closing him in on the landward side ultimate surrender became inevitable and, as Mahan rightly said "With this disaster the hope of subduing the colonies died in England".

This sad chapter of British imperial history has been studied at some length for three reasons. First it teems with lessons on the causes of imperial disruption. From some of these we profited in our later empire building but many lessons are being neglected even today. Second, this rift in the British family brought into existence a new nation, superficially like ourselves in language and cultural veneer, but in reality of a very different character—a nation which unfortunately started its life with a virulent, though sometimes latent, anti-British bias *from which it has never cured itself*. Third, and perhaps most important for the cause of truth, this unfortunate quarrel between the mother country and her offspring has till now almost always been narrated in a one-sided manner. The faults were not all on one side nor all the virtues on the other. Finally, it is worth mentioning that most of the data for this chapter comes from American and not from British sources.

5

THE STRUGGLE FOR INDIA

IN the interests of continuity it has seemed to the author advisable to carry the North American story through to the loss of the thirteen colonies in 1783. It will now be necessary, therefore, to turn back to the launching of the East India Company on the last day of the sixteenth century.

As already stated, during the first quarter-century the Company's attention was concentrated far more intently on the so-called spice islands (Java and Sumatra) than on any part of the Asiatic mainland. But this did not mean that they entirely neglected the idea of starting trade with the Mogul empire also.

In 1607 Captain Hawkins, commanding the *Hector* and representing the East India Company, anchored in Surat at the mouth of the River Tapti on the west coast of India. He found the Indian governor of Cambay, in which province Surat was situated, extremely hostile and obstructive, being entirely under the influence of Portuguese Jesuits. Hawkins determined to appeal over the local governor's head directly to the emperor himself and at length, after almost incredible adventures, he reached Agra and presented personally to the Mogul emperor the letters of credence entrusted to him by King James I. This took place on 16th April, 1609, and marks the first effective step in England's long connection with India. Queen Elizabeth had dispatched John Mildenhall some years earlier, but he had achieved nothing. Some account of this historic occasion is therefore worth recording as exemplifying the obstacles which the English company had to face.

At Jehangir's court resided a Portuguese Jesuit, who acted as his interpreter for European languages. King James' letters were handed to him to translate and, in doing so, the Jesuit so twisted the meaning as to give an unfavourable impression of the English king and nation. Fortunately Hawkins quickly saw what was happening and himself addressed the emperor in the Turkish language. Jehangir, delighted to meet a Westerner who could talk to him directly, engaged Hawkins in a long and friendly conversation, paying little attention to the slow and stilted translation of the Jesuit. This was the first of

many victories won by England in India over her European rivals—a small victory perhaps but productive of great results.

The consequent adventures of Hawkins at the Mogul court would fill a book—how he was offered command of the cavalry and the governorship of a province and how the kindly emperor almost forced him to marry an Armenian damsel. Hawkins, as a loyal servant of the Company, was really more concerned to profit by his favour at court to pave the way for English trade. He convinced Jehangir of the Cambay governor's dishonesty. Makrib, the governor, was arrested and goods stolen from the *Hector* were found in his possession.

From then onward the mastery of English traders over their rivals, the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the Danes, was only a matter of time. It was the French alone who constituted a really dangerous competitor for India, and they came upon the scene some time after the others. The attention of the French East India Company had at first concentrated upon Madagascar, and they spent nearly a hundred years in trying to gain a permanent footing there. Thwarted by the resistance of the Hovas, they took possession of a smaller island about 115 miles to the east, which they called Bourbon, but was later named Reunion. This was their base in the Indian Ocean from 1638 till, in 1715, they took a neighbouring island, now known as Mauritius, from the Dutch.

The French named it Ile de France. From 1735 to 1746 it was governed by Labourdonnais, a naval officer, one of France's most brilliant and enterprising colonial pioneers. During his governorship the War of the Austrian Succession broke out in Europe between England and France. Labourdonnais conceived the idea of harassing the English traders in India by naval raids on their factories, as the trading stations, permitted by the Mogul emperor, were then called. The French by this time had also established factories at Pondicherry (1674), Chandernagore, Yanaon, and Mahe.

The English at this time held Bombay (given by Portugal as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza on her marriage to Charles II), Madras, Fort St. David (near Madras) and Calcutta.

Labourdonnais concentrated his attacks upon the eastern (Coromandel) coast where lay Madras and Fort St. David. He inflicted severe damage, particularly in 1740, but his methods clashed with the longer term plans of Dupleix, then governor-general of the French factories, who had seen possibilities of founding a French empire in India by playing off Indian rulers against the British.

The climax of this quarrel came in 1746, when Madras was captured by Labourdonnais, who gave it back to the British on payment of a ransom. This infuriated Dupleix, who accused Labourdonnais of corruption and had him recalled to France in disgrace. This friction

contributed greatly to saving the English footing on the Coromandel coast. But the really decisive factor in turning the tide for England was the appearance on the scene of Robert Clive.

Clive landed in Madras in 1743 as a junior "writer" or clerk of the East India Company. By nature he was a fighter rather than a pen-pusher and he soon found his true calling.

Within three years of his arrival his first chance to distinguish himself came in the storming of Madras by the French. Dupleix had repudiated the promises of Labourdonnais and retaken the town. Clive's escape through the enemy lines to Fort St. David, his efficient share in its defence and the courage and enterprise shown by him in the storming of Devikota, all contributed toward earning for him the reputation of an outstanding leader in war. It was as well for the East India Company that such a man emerged at that moment, for on the French side Dupleix had been carrying all before him.

The crisis reached a climax in 1751, when Dupleix's ambitious schemes for French empire-building began to bear fruit. To clarify the events of 1751-57 a brief recapitulation will help.

When the Emperor Aurungzebe died in 1707 the Mogul Empire rapidly disintegrated. Its viceroys assumed the roles of independent rulers, even if they nominally recognized the Delhi overlordship. Rivals fought and plotted for mastery of the new kingdoms and the general unrest rapidly affected the European traders.

Historians often skim lightly over the early relationships of the French and English trading companies as though mutual hostility between them only erupted in the time of Clive and Dupleix. This interpretation of history is only partially true. A more accurate picture of the early days is one of constant antagonism, suspicion, and rivalry from the very earliest days between the trading establishments of all four European nations—English, French, Portuguese, and Dutch.

While the Mogul Empire remained an effective power this inter-European rivalry was kept within bounds. The Dutch and Portuguese gradually faded into insignificance, leaving the English and French as growing concerns.

From records written at that time it is clear that public opinion among Indians of the south regarded war between French and English as inevitable. At a very early date local rulers, landowners, and merchants acquired a high degree of cunning in playing off one European race against the other. For their part the attitude of English to French and vice versa varied roughly in proportion to the proximity of individual Europeans to the Indian scene. Thus the actual people on the spot, from highest to lowest, had no illusions at all. Whether in Europe there happened to be peace or war between

France and England mattered little to their countrymen in India. Just as in North America so also in India. Peace might be signed at Ryswick, Utrecht, or Aix-la-Chapelle, and might last uneasily for a few years in Europe. But in India, Pondicherry and Madras, Calcutta and Chandernagore, watched and plotted against one another and intermittently broke into war.

In times of official peace in Europe this local feeling was neither shared nor approved by the authorities of either country who were remote from the Indian scene. Directors of the East India Company bombarded their subordinates with letters, deploring what they considered the too truculent attitude taken locally toward some Indian ruler or toward a neighbouring French trading post. On the French side this divergence of view between men on the spot and others was clearly exemplified in the quarrel between Labourdonnais and Dupleix.

The former was a nobleman of the old school—chivalrous and correct in his behaviour to those with whom his king was at war. As governor of Mauritius (Ile de France) it never occurred to him to harass the English in India until proper war broke out between the two countries. Even then his object was simply the purely military one of assisting France to win the war. He had no idea of participating in a local commercial feud between the two rival East India Companies. This was shown by his chivalrous treatment of Madras both before and after capturing it.

Dupleix was a man of very different stamp—crafty and unscrupulous. As governor of Pondicherry and a high official of the French East India Company his whole outlook was that of the man on the spot, and a shrewd one too. To him the handing back of Madras by Labourdonnais seemed a piece of chivalrous folly. No sooner had the admiral been forced by a storm to withdraw his fleet from Madras than Dupleix violated the agreement and retook the city, treating it and its garrison with ferocity.

Soon after this the disintegration of the Mogul Empire began to be felt in southern India. Nizam-ul-Mulk, viceroy of the Deccan, died, and the usual struggle for the succession broke out. It so happened that one of the Deccanese provinces, known as the Carnatic, had as its nawab a very aged man, a good friend of the English, whose factory of Madras lay within the Carnatic province. During the course of the struggle for the viceroyalty of the Deccan an ambitious usurper, Chunda Sahib, invaded the Carnatic with intent to dethrone the old ruler.

Dupleix, seeing a chance of dominating both the Deccan and the Carnatic by installing a puppet ruler in each, gave full French support to Musaffa Jang, a pretender for the Deccan, and to Chunda Sahib, who was trying to overturn the old friend of the English in

the Carnatic. It was this development in 1751 which brought Anglo-French rivalry in southern India to a sudden and dangerous head.

The old friend of the English was defeated and killed in battle and his son, Mohammed Ali, had to flee to Trichinopoli, leaving Chunda Sahib to occupy most of the Carnatic, including its capital, Arcot.

During the next few weeks the fortunes of the British and of Mohammed Ali reached a very low level. A British and Indian force, sent from Madras to protect Mohammed Ali, was disgracefully routed and driven in confusion under the walls of Trichinopoli. The army of Chunda Sahib, with his French allies, laid siege to the town, by now almost the last peg upon which hung any hope of a British survival in southern India. Loss of morale, amounting almost to panic, numbed the British authorities in Fort St. David and Madras. It was at this desperate juncture that Clive proposed his daring plan to restore the situation.

Clive saw that it would be worse than useless to send reinforcements to Trichinopoli to join the demoralized remnant crouching under its walls. The threatened town lay on the far side of Pondicherry, the French base. Any force sent from Madras or St. David would be struck in the flank by the French before getting anywhere near Trichinopoli.

Much closer to Madras lay Arcot, where Chunda Sahib had recently set up his base from which to conduct the siege of Trichinopoli. Counter-attack, Clive saw, would be the best form of defence. A sharp blow against Chunda Sahib's base would make him relax his pressure on Trichinopoli. It says much for the military reputation already gained by Clive that this twenty-six year old man was able to persuade a group of panic-stricken old men to let him try his plan.

It was a brilliant success. With a force of two hundred Europeans and three hundred sepoys he got within ten miles of Arcot when a thunderstorm, very prolonged and accompanied by torrential rain, fell upon them. Further progress seemed quite impossible and the troops expected their commander to order a halt. But Clive realized that the sheer difficulty of advancing would help him to achieve surprise, so the force pushed on. Its sudden emergence through the storm not only surprised the enemy but filled them with an almost superstitious terror. Town and citadel were both abandoned with hardly a shot fired.

No time was to be lost, for Clive knew that Chunda Sahib would react quickly to the loss of his base. He just had time to provision the citadel for a long siege when a column, variously estimated at three to seven thousand men, entered the city. Some had come from Trichinopoli, thus proving the soundness of Clive's plan. Others converged from Vellore, and a French contingent of a hundred and fifty joined from Pondicherry.

The siege that followed surpassed even the recent capture of Arcot in the renown which it won for the name of Clive among the southern Indian population. The sepoys henceforward regarded him with the adoration which they always give to personal courage in a leader. Clive added to his complete disregard for danger a flair for Oriental warfare and a sympathetic interest in the mentality, the customs, and the language of his troops. With the possible exception of John Nicholson it is doubtful whether any other British officer has equalled Clive in these respects though many, in lesser degree, followed his example.

The siege of Arcot lasted eleven weeks. It was a rarity among sieges in being a victory for the defence without any outside aid from a relieving force. The numerical odds were about thirty-five to one in favour of the besiegers. Clive's troops, reduced by casualities to two hundred or less, had difficulty in manning the huge perimeter. It was an outstanding feat among the world's great sieges. It was also the turning point in the Anglo-French struggle for southern India. Dupleix continued the fight till his replacement by the Comte de Lally three years later. By this time Bengal had supplanted the south as the main theatre of war.

The governor and council at Fort William, the Company's establishment in Calcutta, had watched with growing apprehension the course of events in the Carnatic, but had done little to strengthen their own position for fear of offending the nawab of Bengal. In fact the board of directors in London had reversed their usual tendency of restraining their subordinates from too vigorous action. In 1748 they had cause to reprimand the Calcutta branch for the timidity and lack of initiative in face of the coming danger. Even this did not stir the Calcutta men to action.

Consequently, when Suraj-ud-Dowlah, a viciously cruel young man, became nawab in April 1756, Fort William was still in no fit state to resist an attack. The new ruler soon showed his hatred for the English and his avaricious intentions toward the wealth which he wrongly believed to be stored in the fort. Plans were made for evacuation of British women and children in the large number of ships that were always lying in the Hoogli River.

However, when the nawab advanced with a large army at an alarming speed, scenes of panic broke out on the waterfront. The confusion was such that control of the embarkation failed. The ships, probably under the impression that all had been taken aboard, dropped down the river on the ebb. It has even been alleged by some historians, particularly those writing soon after the event, that the governor and council, together with other influential Europeans, were guilty of flagrant cowardice resulting in a deliberately premature departure of the ships. John Cooke, secretary to the governor

and council, was one of the unfortunates left behind. He survived the Black Hole of Calcutta and lived to give evidence at the subsequent House of Commons inquiry. His evidence was certainly significant. Speaking of what happened after departure of the ships from the quaysides he said:

"Signals were now thrown out from every part of the fort for the ships to come up again to their stations. But in the two days that the fort held out never was a single effort made to send a boat or vessel to bring off any part of the garrison." Another report said: "A single sloop, with fifteen brave men on board, might, in spite of all the efforts of the enemy, have come up and, anchoring under the fort, have carried away all who (subsequently) suffered in the dungeon."

To one who knows the terriffic tides of the Hoogli (as the present writer does) a simpler explanation suggests itself. When the ebb tide was running fully it may have been a sheer impossibility for any ship to return up-stream to Fort William after once having cast off. It should be remembered that sea-going sailing ships would not have been easily manoeuvrable in that narrow river, especially under the light airs or calms which probably prevailed there during the month of June. It seems easier to accept this explanation than to believe that English seamen and their officers would deliberately have abandoned their compatriots, or that a man bearing the fine English name of Drake could have displayed such cowardice and such treachery toward his subordinates as has been imputed to the governor.

On the other hand it cannot be denied that he and his chief officers embarked before ensuring that all his subordinates were safe—conduct in unpleasant contrast to that of the British commander at Dunkirk. Neither can it be denied that the tides of the Hoogli only ebb for a few hours and the fort held out for *two days* after departure of the ships. This failure to return up-stream, however, may be due to the fact that the signals from the fort were not seen—there seems to have been no acknowledgement from any of the ships.

Whatever the causes, the fact remains that the ships departed, leaving behind 146 Europeans, who were subsequently crammed for a whole night into a room about eighteen feet square, the notorious Black Hole of Calcutta, whence twenty-three, including one woman, were taken out alive.

There has even been controversy about this. It has been suggested by some writers that the nawab himself was not personally guilty. Exponents of this theory refer to the civility which he showed to Mr. Holwell, the senior of the prisoners, when the latter was brought before him. They claim that the choice of that small room for so great a number of prisoners was merely an act of Oriental stupidity,

done by minor officials without the knowledge of the nawab. It may be so, but there was no mere stupidity about the conduct of the guards during the night.

Some of them mocked the suffocating inmates, holding water up to the window but snatching it away again. Others, it is true, were more humane, but even these refused to remedy the mistake (if it was a mistake) on the excuse that only the nawab could authorize removal to another prison cell. They said that the nawab was asleep and that none dared to wake him up.

This seems to indicate either that the nawab was aware of the prison arrangements or else that he was so terrible a tyrant that none dared to awake him, even to rectify a ghastly blunder.

At this late date it does not really matter much whether Suraj-ud-Dowlah was guilty or not or again whether Drake and his council were guilty of cowardice or not. The controversy has been outlined simply to show that at all stages of our imperial history there have been writers anxious to blacken the good name of Englishmen and to whitewash the enemies of our country—even those closely involved in bestial crimes.

Whatever we believe about it today, there is no doubt concerning its effect on public opinion in Madras and Fort St. David. It was resolved that a combined naval and military force should be sent to the Hoogli to restore the situation for the East India Company in Calcutta and to punish those guilty of the massacre. Nearly six months were wasted, however, in putting this resolution into effect. There was much argument as to the choice of commander, but eventually Clive was selected. In December 1756 the expedition reached the Hoogli, having been delayed by adverse winds in the Bay of Bengal as well as by the long-winded debates of the planning committee. Admiral Watson commanded the fleet, a blunt and honest sailor destined to find himself in serious disagreement on at least one occasion with the somewhat Oriental outlook of Clive.

Suraj-ud-Dowlah appears to have been taken by surprise when the British fleet entered the Hoogli and disembarked an army of about three thousand, one-third of whom were white.

To gain time he opened negotiations with Clive, who did not rebuff his approaches, though it is unlikely that either of them were genuinely seeking peace. A month after the British landing the nawab appeared before Calcutta with a huge army and commenced an investment of the place, at the same time carrying on his negotiations with Clive. It would be tedious and unprofitable to study in detail the extraordinary mixture of talks and combats which took place during the following months, as both talks and combats were only moves in a game of Oriental cunning aimed at bolstering the

"izzat" or renown either of the nawab or of Clive. It is hardly surprising that the blunt admiral became impatient. He did not understand what was going on.

Looking back with the knowledge that we now possess it is clear that Clive foresaw the necessity, not only of making an end of French influence in India but also of deposing Suraj-ud-Dowlah and replacing him by some compliant puppet, through whom the East India Company might restore order in Bengal. In fact he saw the wisdom of Dupleix's plan as well as the need for ruining its inventor. But Clive was probably the only Englishman at that time with such a clear vision of the possibilities and dangers. He had to cope, therefore, not only with the wily Suraj-ud-Dowlah and the shrewd Frenchmen of Chandernagore but also with the silly intrigues of the East India Company's senior officials both in Madras and Calcutta.

It is scarcely credible but none the less true that Mr. Drake, the governor, whose departure from Calcutta had roused invidious comments, had now been reinstated there and used his position to thwart Clive in every way possible, as being a nominee of the Madras presidency, with whom the Calcutta presidency was perpetually on terms of mutual distrust and jealousy.

In these difficult conditions of intrigue and obstruction from those who ought to have supported him Clive conducted his scheme for exploiting the hatred for Suraj-ud-Dowlah, which was known to be rife among his subjects and in his court at Murshedabad. Prominent among conspirators, known to be preparing a palace revolution, was Mir Jaffar, commander of the nawab's army. Clive opened secret negotiations with Mir Jaffar and in so doing involved himself in a disreputable affair which unfortunately stained the good name of this otherwise great Englishman. In extenuation for Clive it must be remembered that he was acting alone in the interests of his country and his employers, that he was dealing with the craftiest of Orientals with whom a straight deal was almost impossible, and that he could not trust even his English colleagues, except perhaps Admiral Watson, who was too blunt and guileless to see the need for any trickery at all.

But, when all this has been allowed in his favour, it is hard to deny that he went rather too far in outwitting a knave by knavery. This is the sad and unsavoury story.

The secret negotiations with Mir Jaffar were conducted through a shady Bengali merchant-banker named Omichand. Though fabulously wealthy, he was avaricious and utterly unscrupulous. He first came into the business by offering, at a price, to ruin Suraj-ud-Dowlah, who had treated him fairly and generously, compensating him in full for his losses during the Calcutta fighting. That Omi-

chand was a man who would betray anybody for money was soon to be amply proved.

When agreement had been reached through Omichand for Mir Jaffar to desert his master at a critical point in the coming battle, and when all concerned had set their signatures to a thoroughly incriminating document, Omichand suddenly showed his hand. He threatened to disclose the entire plot to Suraj-ud-Dowlah unless he (Omichand) was paid three hundred thousand pounds sterling. It was a preposterous sum for those days and, in any case, Clive could not trust him to keep silence even if this sum were paid to him. Not only the whole plan of campaign was threatened with ruin. Mir Jaffar and a large number of high officials at Murshedabad were deeply implicated, and would face torture and agonizing deaths. Besides this the tiny British army had already crossed the Hoogli and put itself into a position of dire peril if Mir Jaffar's part in the coming battle failed to materialize. At all costs Omichand must be silenced till after the battle. But Clive neither possessed the money demanded nor would willingly have paid it. So he resorted to a trick.

Omichand expressed willingness to wait for the money if meanwhile given a security. What he demanded was a copy of the secret treaty, containing a clause in which Mir Jaffar would promise, on becoming nawab in Suraj-ud-Dowlah's place, to pay Omichand the stipulated sum. He considered that this would bind all the conspirators far more completely than any written proofs of the conspiracy which he hitherto possessed.

Clive had two copies of the treaty prepared. The genuine version was on white paper and made no mention of Omichand or his reward. The second copy, on red paper, was a sham. It contained the clause demanded by the banker.

But, in order to carry out his deception, it was vital for Clive to obtain the admiral's signature to both documents in addition to his own signature. Watson flatly refused. But, somehow or other, when the fictitious copy was handed to Omichand, something purporting to be the admiral's signature had been inserted in the appropriate place!

Macaulay categorically accused Clive of forgery. It is doubtful whether his hand actually held the pen, but morally he must bear the blame. The trick worked. The treacherous banker was deceived, and it is said that after the battle, when shown the genuine document, without a mention of his name, he went mad and shortly afterward died of rage and a broken heart.

It is a pity that Plassey, one of the finest battles in British history, should have had as its prelude this piece of rascality. The battle itself was a straightforward affair in which the steadfastness of the troops rather than any special skill on the commander's part decided the

day. The night before battle was spent by Clive's three thousand men with their backs to a large grove of mango trees and behind that again the wide river, flooded by monsoon rains. It was a position from which an orderly retreat would have been difficult if not impossible.

Ahead of them across the flat paddy fields could be heard the low murmur of an enormous army. Estimates after the battle put them at over fifty thousand men, though a part of this horde, it should be remembered, was under direct command of Mir Jaffar, the prospective traitor.

Clive is reported to have spent a sleepless night, pacing the mango grove in anxious thought. Never before had he shown any such nervousness before a battle—and well he might on this tremendous occasion. His profound understanding of Indian affairs told him that this battle would decide the fate of the British in India—perhaps even the fate of the whole war with France. Many factors were there to worry him—the vast discrepancy in numbers, the uncertainty whether Mir Jaffar would keep his word, and the tactically perilous position of the three thousand with their backs to two formidable defiles.

Fortunately the commander's anxiety was not shared by his troops. The British are reported to have slept well and stood to arms as dawn approached, if not confident of victory, at any rate determined to deserve it. As for the two thousand sepoys, their faith in Clive was absolute.

As the huge army advanced across the fields in a great line overlaping the British flanks on both sides, amazement was caused by the size of the nawab's artillery and the number of his guns. Huge pieces, of Indian manufacture, hauled by teams of white oxen and pushed by elephants, rumbled across the plain at a surprisingly rapid speed in front of the infantry. When the guns came within a few hundred yards of the British front line they unlimbered and commenced a heavy bombardment.

Fortunately their aim was not accurate and most of the projectiles exploded in the mango grove behind. But the roar of their passage close above the heads of Clive's men and the din of the guns themselves and the explosions behind would have shaken the nerves of less disciplined troops. Neither British nor sepoys showed any sign of unsteadiness under this ordeal. It is a fact, well known to experienced soldiers, that to stand firm but inactive under fire is a greater test than to assault against similar fire.

At this stage of the battle action was only required of Clive's artillery and they played their part efficiently. The teams of oxen and the elephants were soon thrown into confusion by the British guns and many of the ponderous Indian pieces were knocked out

by direct hits. It was far more difficult to silence the light guns, manned by Frenchmen. These were brilliantly handled and did considerable execution before they could be neutralized.

During this phase Clive could identify the troops of Mir Jaffar, forming one flank of the nawab's long line of battle. So far there was no indication as to what part (if any) these troops and their commander would play in the battle. However, unknown to Clive till later, his secret ally had already co-operated by sowing the seeds of defeat in the mind of Suraj-ud-Dowlah.

The nawab, demoralized by the British bombardment, which had killed one of his most reliable generals, held a council of war in his tent. Mir Jaffar, perceiving that Suraj had lost his nerve, recommended an immediate withdrawal to the entrenchments occupied during the previous night. Mohan Lal, another general, stoutly opposed this, knowing how quickly retreat could change to panic and rout in an army of that type and size. But Mir Jaffar's advice prevailed and the order for retirement was given.

Clive was quick to appreciate that the moment for bold action had come. He ordered a general advance and his entire force, with the British 39th Regiment of Foot leading, moved steadily upon the centre of the immense overlapping line. This was the action which earned for the 39th Foot (later the Dorsets) the proud motto of "Primus in Indis".

As his three thousand advanced, Clive anxiously watched the enemy flank where Mir Jaffar's contingent was drawn up. Would they retreat with the rest? If not, how would Mir Jaffar react to the changing shape of the battle? For, if the Mir's troops stood their ground, Clive's small army would soon be outflanked on that side and extremely vulnerable to a crushing pincer movement. But the troops on the flank stood still and gave no sign of their commander's intention. The fate of the battle and all its great political consequences hung upon the word of this temperamental conspirator, who had already given Clive reason to doubt his reliability.

But all went well. Mir Jaffar kept his word—at least up to a point. He did not, as he had promised to do, commit his troops to fight on the British side. Perhaps he felt that this would strain their loyalty to him too much. He simply held them inactive and neutral while Clive's counter-attack passed by. The huge and menacing flank formation just watched while Clive and his troops entered the jaws of the pincers and completed the rout of the nawab's main army.

This great day, 23rd June, 1757, may be counted as the foundation of the British Empire in India. Thenceforward, though Mir Jaffar was nominal ruler of Bengal, the East India Company called the tune. Matters by no means ran smoothly between the Company and its puppet ruler, or with his successor. But slowly and surely British

influence established itself firmly in Bengal, whence in course of time it spread north-westward to the Khyber Pass—a long story which will be very briefly outlined in the next chapter. When once the French hopes of an Indian empire were defeated it was only a matter of time before the one remaining European power, the British, should become paramount throughout the sub-continent, annexing vast regions of it and allowing the surviving Indian states to exist only in a semi-independent form.

As far as concerned the French in Bengal the Plassey battle finished them. Clive demanded of his new protégé, Mir Jaffar, that one of his first acts as nawab should be the expulsion of the French from Chandernagore, their only settlement in Bengal. It would undoubtedly have been done had not the Treaty of Paris in 1763 put an end to the Seven Years War. Chandernagore was one of the bargaining pawns of the peace-making diplomats in Europe, and it was handed back to France as a measure of good will, being by now only a decaying up-river suburb of Calcutta quite incapable of harming or endangering British rule in Bengal.

In the Deccan and Carnatic the Anglo-French struggle continued for three years after Plassey, thanks to the ability of the Comte de Lally, who had succeeded Dupleix. But in 1760 he met his match at Wandewash at the hands of Sir Eyre Coote, a distinguished Irish soldier who had served under Clive at Plassey. The following year Sir Eyre captured Pondicherry and so gave the *coup de grâce* to French hopes of empire. During subsequent wars France renewed her efforts to gain a footing in southern India by supporting Hyder Ali, the dictator of Mysore, and later his son Tippu Sultan in their wars against the British. For Clive's victory of Plassey, though it opened a path up the Ganges valley toward Delhi, still left three formidable Indian powers to be subdued in southern India—Mysore, the Deccan, and a warlike Hindu confederation, the Mahrattas. All these native wars and the part played in them by the French fall more appropriately into the next chapter.

6

EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION

THE Seven Years War may justifiably be called the foundation stone of the British Empire. Clive and Wolfe were its two principal founders. One secured India and the other Canada.

Both these great lands had yet to be moulded into nations under the British Crown. Both were threatened at least once again by external enemies—India by Napoleon's intrigues with Tippu Sultan and by his ambitious scheme for an invasion overland from Egypt. Canada, during the final years of the Napoleonic struggle, when Great Britain was fully occupied in her fight for the freedom of Europe, was threatened by an American attempt at annexation—a stab in the back for Great Britain if ever there was one.

But neither of these threats came anywhere near to reversing the results achieved in the Seven Years War. Napoleon's plan was wrecked by Nelson in the Battle of the Nile, leaving Tippu to fight on without French help to his inevitable defeat. The only important result of this French thrust eastward was to bring about the spread of the British Empire to Africa. For the threat to India caused British stategy to concern itself more closely than before with the two ends of Africa round which passed the routes from France to the east—namely Egypt and the Cape of Good Hope. The establishment of British influence at these points led gradually to Cecil Rhodes' dream of an all-red Cape to Cairo land route—a dream which was brought to reality for a very short while when the ex-German colony of Tanganyika passed into British hands as a mandate of the League of Nations.

As to the American attempt on Canada in 1812, this was a part of the wave of imperialistic jingoism that swept the United States in the early nineteenth century. The slogan of "manifest destiny" (meaning an allegedly manifest destiny to rule the whole of North America) was used as a pretext for invading Florida and forcing Spain to sell that territory. The same slogan excused the later expulsion of Mexico from Texas and all territories north of the Rio Grande. It was also deemed a justification for an almost complete extermination of the redskins in the Middle West. But, when the same idea was applied to Canada, the Americans met with a rebuff. Loyal

Canadians, whether of French stock or British, showed to no uncertain tune that they had no wish to become Americans. The attempted invasion was soundly defeated.

These two adventures—sole instances of attempts by other great powers to smash the growing Empire—can hardly be said to have interrupted or endangered the lead secured by Great Britain in the Seven Years War—a lead which continued unchallenged for a century or more. From time to time some minor frontier dispute arose, such as the Herat and Pendjeh incidents with Russia, the Fashoda crisis with France, or the Venezuela dispute with the United States. But these and many similar storms in a teacup were settled diplomatically without war between the big powers concerned. For many years Great Britain was tacitly accepted as the leading colonial power in most parts of the world except Central and South America. Vaguely defined, but none the less recognized spheres of influence covered much of southern Asia, Australasia, Oceania, and the eastern and southern parts of Africa. The Indian Ocean and its off-shoots, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, became strategically British lakes. Innumerable Asiatic and African potentates came to accept the protection of Great Britain, which meant that, although these minor rulers exercised complete authority within their own domains, they were precluded from direct dealings with any great power other than the British.

It must not, however, be thought that these long years of almost unchallenged colonial development were years of peace for the mother country. Far from it. The balance of power still had to be maintained in Europe itself and later in the borders of the dying Ottoman Empire. The titanic struggle, known as the Napoleonic Wars, which lasted from the French Revolution in 1793 to the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 with only one brief and spurious truce in 1802, more than once brought Great Britain and her allies to the brink of defeat. The Crimean War of 1854 was the only clash which involved British troops in an inter-European struggle between Waterloo and Mons. Though not a major war by Napoleonic or twentieth-century standards, the Crimean War was in fact a struggle for maintenance of the balance of power, whose fulcrum had by this time shifted from Central Europe to the Near East.

If proof be needed that Great Britain, from the Seven Years War right onward almost to 1914, was able to proceed, almost undisturbed by other great power rivalries, with the expansion, development, and consolidation of her empire, such proof may be found in the voyages of Captain James Cook, the explorer, between 1763 and 1779 and in the subsequent opening of the Pacific and South Antarctic Oceans to trade and normal activities. Cook's three voyages covered a period just after the Seven Years War and a time

when the War of American Independence was in full swing. One might expect to find in his logs some occasional reference to tricky encounters with privateers of France, Spain or even the rebellious colonists, seeing that he traversed seas and explored shores of interest to all these powers. But throughout his narratives there is scarcely a mention of war or any thought for armed encounters. The British explorer seems to have had these oceans entirely to himself.

In the same way the history of Australia and New Zealand stands out in strong contrast to the wars by which Canada and India were won for the British Empire. The antipodes do not seem to have excited the cupidity or enterprise of early merchants—whether English, French, Dutch, Spanish, or Portuguese—to nearly the same extent as did the fabulous wealth of Cathay or the spice islands or the vaguely described Indies.

In one sense this was strange, because belief in a great southern continent was general among European geographers at a very early period. In fact the very name Australia derives from Tierra Austral del Espíritu Santo, a name given by the Spanish geographer Quirros, who accompanied the explorer Torres on an expedition sent from Peru to discover the semi-mythical continent. Whether the Spaniards or the Dutch, probing southward from Java, were the first to sight the large land mass is of little importance, for neither nation followed up the discovery. Geographers were even left in doubt as to whether the vaguely pinpointed land mass was the northern edge of a huge continent or not. The antipodes seem to have left the rival empire-building nations cold.

In the earlier phase this lack of interest may well have been due to the greater attraction of Cathay and the Indies. America was believed to lie on one of the routes to these lands of plenty, whereas the southern continent obviously did not. But after the Seven Years War, when Great Britain had driven her rivals from the field as far as concerned North America and India, one might have thought that France and Holland, if not Spain and Portugal too, might have turned their colonizing zeal toward the antipodes as a sort of consolation prize. But they did not. Great Britain was left undisturbed, not only to extend her hold over the two big prizes of Canada and India but also to explore the rest of the hitherto unknown world and take possession of what seemed worth having.

"Happy is the country that has no history" is an old and sometimes very true saying. By this criterion Australia and New Zealand should be happy indeed. Apart from the unwise use of the former as a dumping ground for convicts in the early days, which produced the mild excitements of bushranging during the middle nineteenth century, Australian history was characterized by dogged

exploration of the waterless interior, by the development of the sheep-farming industry, by the brief thrills of the gold rush, and by the gradual, and for a long time the mutually suspicious, merging of the six original colonies into the Commonwealth of Australia. Unlike North America or India, Australia had no formidable indigenous enemies to be overcome by large scale colonial wars, the aborigines of Australia being too few in numbers and insufficiently advanced both socially and militarily to offer serious resistance to white settlement.

In this respect New Zealand was less fortunate, being inhabited by warlike Maori tribes. This discouraged Tasman in 1642 from staying ashore for very long, but Cook in 1769 was a little more sucessful in making friends with some tribesmen.

On the whole, however, the Maoris acquired a reputation as ferocious cannibals, and it was not till 1814 that Marsden and other missionaries began to make progress with civilizing the Maoris. In the wake of the missionaries, settlers began to acquire land and in 1840 an assembly of chiefs signed the Treaty of Waitanga, placing themselves under the protection of Queen Victoria. They had already asked for British protection in 1833 and it must be admitted that protection against rapacious settlers was what they wanted, since they were not threatened by any other enemy.

Despite the conscientious efforts of Gray and other colonial administrators the quarrels over land purchase persisted, and were the causes of a series of Maori wars from 1845 to 1870. Fortunately however these wars never reached the extreme of extermination of the Maoris by the white men, as was the case as regards the redskins in the United States. The New Zealand settlers finally acquired a friendly admiration for the courage and dignity with which the Maoris fought for their country, and the two races succeeded in settling down together amicably on a basis of mutual respect.

When one takes into account the comparatively isolated and peaceful development of these two new nations, Australians and New Zealanders, it is very greatly indeed to their credit that their young men volunteered in thousands to help the mother country in her Boer War at the turn of the century and in the two world wars of 1914 and 1939. It will be remembered that failure to do this on the part of North American settlers during the middle eighteenth century was one of the roots of ill feeling which led to the American War of Independence.

Turning to African colonization, we find that the situation was different both from that of the antipodes and that of India and Canada.

Africa had been well known to the Mediterranean peoples of Europe almost from the beginning of history. By the Middle Ages it

must have been known to every schoolboy in Europe that a vast black-inhabited continent lay immediately to the south. This was common knowledge long before India, China, and the Americas were more than vague rumours.

Yet for centuries Africa remained the mysterious dark continent. Even the Spaniards and Portuguese, who had experienced the closest connections with Africa through the Arab occupation, did not do more than occupy a few forts along the coast. To Prince Henry the Navigator and, indeed, to the whole enterprising galaxy of seafaring explorers—Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, Danish or English—the dark continent was just a huge obstacle that had to be circumnavigated in order to get at the real lands of plenty, the spice islands and the Indies. What little they saw of Africa as they coasted along it cannot have seemed very inviting. What they knew of its northern hinterland must have helped to discourage further investigation of the continent. For North Africa, they knew, was the home of fanatical Moslem pirates with a gigantic desert to the south of them.

Later, when development of tobacco and sugar plantations in America created a demand for labour, a flourishing slave trade sprang up as a one-way traffic between West Africa and the new lands across the Atlantic. This resulted in a few more forts being planted along the West African coast by the Portuguese, Danes, and Dutch. Similar English installations appeared there later, but these were sited for the worthier purpose of stopping the slave trade or (as in Sierra Leone's case) of providing a settlement for released slaves from the West Indies. To say this does not imply that the English were guiltless of the slave trade. Unfortunately in the early days this was not the case. But Hawkins and other bold adventurers, who indulged in the trade, had no need of forts or shore establishments. They simply sailed into African creeks and took such human cargoes as they wanted, regardless of the Portuguese who vainly tried to claim this monopoly.

The consequence of all this was that the west coast became sprinkled with small European holdings while the east coast was left till much later as a hunting ground for Arab slavers. The southern tip of the continent only acquired importance when the route to India became busy with Dutch shipping. The Portuguese did not occupy it but preferred their ports of call in Angola and Mozambique, probably on account of the foul reputation of the Cape itself for storms. It was left to the Dutch to plant a settlement there as a half-way house on their route to Java.

So matters remained until Napoleon's Egyptian campaign and its exposure of French designs on India. This caused the British to occupy both Egypt and the Cape, the two extremes of Africa which

were the sea doors to India. Subsequent annexation of the whole Nile basin and of nearly all East Africa followed in due course. It is hard to discern whether this advance was inspired by the dream of Cecil Rhodes for an all red Cape-to-Cairo corridor or whether a British desire to suppress the Arab slave trade played a predominant part. It is significant that General Gordon was sent to Khartoum at about the same time when Rhodes became Prime Minister of Cape Colony, and that these two were in close correspondence. Furthermore, only ten years earlier Livingstone had roused the conscience of Victorian England by his disclosures of Portuguese and Arab slaving methods up and down the East African coast and in the hinterland.

It is probable that altruism and shrewd imperialistic foresight combined to bring the long strip of territory between the Nile and the Zambezi under British rule, thus linking up the two thrusts which law and order had necessitated—the one from Egypt southward to end the barbarous anarchy of Mahdism in the Sudan and the other northward to subdue the warlike habits of the Matabele. In any case, no matter what may have been the urge toward conquest in eastern Africa—whether restoration of law and order, suppression of inhumanities, or just plain imperialism—there is no doubt whatsoever about one thing. There is no part of British Africa that did not benefit immeasurably, in terms of happiness for the inhabitants, from their temporary sojourn under British administration. This is true of the entire British Empire, but is particularly applicable to the negro-inhabited regions of the dark continent, where absolutely no advance in civilization had been achieved at all before the coming of the white men. Not even so simple a mechanical device as the wheel had been invented by indigenous enterprise.

In a book of this size there cannot unfortunately be room for detailed accounts of the series of colonial wars which formed a part of the long process of imperial expansion, pacification, and consolidation between the end of the Seven Years War and the jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897. The former date marked the moment of history when the way was clear for British empire building to begin. The Great Queen's jubilee marked the highest peak of that achievement just before the tragic decline and dissolution set in.

The history of British India alone was marked by a series of wars, first against the Mahrattas of the south and centre and against the well equipped army of Mysore, then against the Rohillas and Pindaris—robber tribes who plagued the rich Ganges-Jumna valley. Later came two wars against the Sikh kingdom of the Punjab, whereby British rule came into contact with the wild Pathan and Baluchi tribes of the North-West Frontier. Even then, though the natural frontier of the Indian sub-continent had been reached, British and

Indian troops had to fight three wars against Afghanistan and innumerable smaller ones against the hill tribes of the unadministered borderlands. Misrule in Burma under her rather sadistic king Thebaw necessitated two wars against that country and her annexation to British India. This again led to small punitive expeditions against frontier tribes more primitive than the Pathans—e.g., the Nagas, Lushai, and Abors, of the north-eastern jungles. Northward the unique mountain chain of the Himalayas provided an almost perfect frontier and, in consequence, wars along this extensive stretch were rare and unimportant. The biggest, in 1814, against Nepal, ended indecisively, but produced between British and Gurkhas such a profound mutual respect for the fighting qualities, each of the other, as to cement a friendship perhaps unparalleled anywhere else in the world between the soldiers of two nations.

Internally, too, the military history of the growing Indian Empire included two serious military mutinies. It is significant to note that after the second and far larger outbreak in 1857 no further trouble of that kind recurred for the remaining period (almost a century) of British administration of the Indian Army.

This century of contentment among the sepoys and country folk of India, following an internal war so stained, as was the Mutiny, with bloody deeds on both sides, gives the lie to those who slanderously describe British rule in India as a military tyranny, forcibly holding down a cowed but seething peasantry. Never before or since has a bitter and vindictive war of that kind been followed by so complete a reconciliation. The reason for this is well worth investigation.

Though a book would be needed to chronicle the turbulent military history outlined above, we can and ought to extract and ponder the main lesson of all these wars, mutinies, and periods of peace between them. British success in winning and holding India was *not* due to deployment of overwhelming military force after the Russian empire-building pattern, nor was it achieved by a deluge of dollars after the American pattern. British imperial success, both in peace and war, was gained through the faithful and devoted services of a long line of conscientious men—both administrators and military commanders.

It was not always so from the beginning. The early days of the East India Company provide rather unsavoury reading with their records of bribery, corruption, and extortion on the grand scale perpetrated by highly placed servants of the Company. Those were the days of the nabobs, much satirized in the literature of their time —men, often of humble origin, who had exploited their opportunities as officials of the Company to amass immense private fortunes with which to cut a dash in England. In extenuation for these impro-

prieties it must be remembered that their perpetrators were merely imitating the custom of the East, as practised by the local rajahs and rich men with whom they had to live in contact. In the India of those days it was customary and honourable to give and to receive lavish presents in gratitude for favours bestowed from above. The Company's servants were too poorly paid for keeping up a proper status amid such wealth.

Even Clive, in his earlier days, fell a victim to this habit of using his official position to line his own pockets. But it was Clive who saw the evil of such a system and who stamped it out. He forced the directors of the Company to pay their servants in India an adequate salary—even a generous salary for those days—and then he drastically cleaned up the civil service, ruthlessly throwing out any who persisted in the old ways after all excuse for so doing had ended. Thus it was Clive who may be said to have founded not only the British Empire in India but also the magnificent civil service on which the success of British rule depended. Some of its members in latter years may have developed the slightly pompous aloofness which earned for the I.C.S. the mocking nickname of the "twice-born". But this taunt was applied by those outside the august service in no envious sense but with an ungrudging admiration for men of incorruptible fairness.

Some empires are simply police states. The British Empire in India was typified by the district commissioner or collector—a solitary white man administering territory as extensive as many a sovereign state, singlehanded except for Indian subordinates, whom he himself had probably trained. A constant source of amazement to foreign globe-trotters, passing through remote rural districts of India, used to be the thinness on the ground of the ruling race. One white man in charge of hundreds of square miles. One British battalion to every four or more Indian units, and this proportion was adopted again only a few years after the end of the bitter Mutiny struggle.

The high standards, set by the reformed Civil Service, soon spread into the army and other government services. Here again it had not always been so. In the early days of the East India Company, when unrest and French hostility were compelling the English in India to raise troops for their own defence, it was not easy to secure in sufficient numbers the right type of officers to command the new sepoy units. The pay was even less than that of the Company's civil administrators. The prestige of military officers in the Company's service was markedly inferior to that of the regular army officers. Relationships between the two armies were far from smooth or happy. Short periods of active fighting were interspersed with long periods of inactivity. The climate of southern India was not conducive to the maintenance of alert minds or physically active bodies

among officers who saw litle prospect of high command. The opprobrious term sloth belt was applied by troops, serving in the more exciting conditions of Bengal or Oudh to their comrades, dragging out an idle but very monotonous existence down in Travancore or the Carnatic. It was quite unusual in those early days for officers to bother to learn the language of the sepoys under their command. Once again it was largely, though not solely, due to Clive that this state of affairs was remedied. He was the first among his contemporaries to make himself not only fluent in the vernaculars of southern India but also to understand, as far as any European could understand, the mentality of his sepoys.

When the centre of military campaigning shifted from the south to Bengal and the Ganges-Jumna plains, a new type of army officer rapidly took the place of the old sloth belt type. Active service in a less relaxing climate, the exciting prospect of taking law and order into the semi-anarchic provinces of the dying Mogul Empire and, most important change of all, the thrill of training and commanding men of the true fighting races of northern India—all these combined to put zest into the profession of arms. There also commenced opportunities for keen army officers to combine the job of fighting with that of teritorial administration. As the frontiers of British rule spread north-westward, the demand for political officers and civil administrators soon outstripped the numbers that could be found from the civilian personnel of the Company. Hence arose that fine tradition of soldier-administrator typified by such men as Herbert Edwardes, John Nicholson, Henry Lawrence and his two brothers, James Abbott, and in later years Colonel Mackeson, Robert Sandeman, and Robert Warburton, and many others.

Indeed, throughout British Indian history, the dividing line between civil servants and military officers was always flexible. Clive himself was both soldier and administrator from his early days as a junior clerk to his governorship of Bengal.

In recent times, right up to the end of British rule, it was customary for army officers with a flair for languages and for handling local populations to transfer temporarily or even permanently to the Political Department, which involved the supervision and guidance of frontier tribes.

This flexibility for combining military and administrative skills was not, in fact, confined to the official classes. In a country where white men were thinly scattered, and often working alone, times of crisis called upon planters and other non-officials to rise to the emergency, and in many cases they most nobly did so. The indigo-planter Venables of Azimgarh, finding himself the only white man in a disaffected area during the Mutiny, raised a small private army

of loyal Indians and upheld law and order in his district for several months unaided.

In peace or war examples abound of this moral mastery by one white man over a multitude of others. Colonel Gillespie, single-handed, quelled the Vellore mutiny of 1806 by sheer force of character, after having himself hauled up into the fort by the belts of the besieged garrison. Nicholson, almost single-handed also, won over the hostile Sikh garrison of Attock, again by his force of character. Old General Hearsey, in the Mangal Pandy affair at Barrackpore, faced a mutinous battalion, and dominated them all by sheer will power. And, perhaps the most remarkable of all examples of one man's moral mastery was the story of Warburton's eighteen years in charge of the Khyber Pass. With a walking stick as his only weapon he pacified some of the world's fiercest tribesmen to such a degree that the Viceroy was able to pay a ceremonial visit to that notorious defile.

This was the secret weapon by which the British Empire was built and administered. Not by use of crushing material strength but by putting the right man in local charge and trusting him to do rightly. It was not due to mere Oriental flattery that white men in India were frequently addressed as "gharib parwar" (protector of the poor). There are many other terms of respect in Oriental languages—flowery expressions which mean little or nothing. But this honourable title meant just what it said. Its utterers felt that they were addressing a man who could be trusted to do justice and to keep his word.

As in India so also it was in Africa, South-East Asia, and the sprawling area known as the Middle East, over much of which Great Britain exercised a shadowy but none the less effective control in order to safeguard the Suez Canal and the Red Sea from domination by any other great power.

Such fighting as the British Army had to undertake during the long *Pax Britannica* consisted therefore of colonial wars—that is to say small campaigns against primitive rulers or tribal enemies who were usually valiant and cunning fighters, particularly in their own undeveloped country, but who had neither the cohesion of regular armies nor powerful modern armaments. The problems presented to British forces were often formidable, but they called for solutions of a special type, very different to the problems and answers of an orthodox large scale war. British soldiers tended consequently toward a certain colonial war outlook, and it is hardly surprising that some unpleasant tactical shocks were suffered when they met the Boers, a tough and austerely religious farming community, well, though not lavishly, armed, whose European intelligence enabled them to learn and apply the most up-to-date tactical methods to the best

advantage. It was indeed fortunate for the British Army that this small but difficult war against a modernly equipped enemy took place before the larger ordeal of 1914. The lessons bitterly learned in South Africa, contrary to the belief of some armchair critics, were not wasted on the British Army, with the result that this "contemptible little army" (as the Kaiser called it) gave Von Kluck an unpleasant surprise at Mons.

This gigantic empire, won only partially by a series of colonial wars but far more by the personal influence of a small leaven of fine men, was held together in peace and prosperity by the same means. To hold down by force such a widespread empire an immense standing army would have been required. Great Britain could neither afford nor did she need such an army because, apart from a very tiny group of malcontents, good will and contentment were the cement which held the Empire together. Peoples, who had recently been fighting bitterly against the British, settled down almost at once as loyal and happy subjects of the Queen-Empress. Among many examples of such metamorphoses the case of the Punjab stands out. (See Chapter VIII, page 89.)

British success in pacifying and civilizing such a large part of the hitherto uncivilized world is all the more remarkable if one considers the types of humanity that she had to subdue and civilize. It was not just a question of teaching gentle but untutored primitives, such as Tibetans or South Sea Islanders.

Among fighting races met and defeated by British arms in colonial wars were the Zulus, Matabele, and Basutos of South Africa, the Masai of East Africa, the Somalis, Hadendowa, and fanatical dervishes of the Sudan, the Maoris of New Zealand, and the Ashantis in West Africa. The fighting races of India and her frontiers have already been mentioned—Sikhs, Pathans, Rajputs, Mahrattas, Moplas, Rohillas, and others. All these ranked among the world's toughest and most pugnacious fighters. Yet these were the people who settled down, peacefully and contentedly, as members of the great empire, because they quickly learned to trust their white administrators. There were, it is true, occasional relapses. It could hardly have been otherwise. The lone white man on this civilizing work took his life in his hands and he knew it. Often it was one of the most beloved and respected officials who fell to the knife of some religious fanatic. Mackeson, murdered in the heart of Peshawar cantonment, and Handyside, that intrepid constabulary officer of recent times, were examples of this. But on the whole the system succeeded wherever applied to the virile fighting races. Where it failed was in dealing with softer but more sophisticated people, such as the baboos of Bengal or semi-Europeanized members of the Egyptian middle classes.

Ascetic and nominally non-violent Hindus were the breeding ground for anti-British sentiments in India, just as in Africa it was the English-speaking and comparatively well-read doctors, of some social-economic faculty. These men, often the product of a missionary school, with their education capped by a degree in some American university or other, were counterparts of the intellectual minorities that, in all countries, have formed the breeding grounds for revolution and unrest. In the next chapter we shall see that in Great Britain herself seeds of weakness and decay were taking root—first in the minds of a few left-wing intellectuals and through them gradually undermining the moral and mental stability of the British ruling class.

7

SEEDS OF DECAY

A MISTAKE, frequently made by those who seek for causes of shattering changes in the affairs of men, is the tendency to give too much weight to material factors and to underestimate the influence of spiritual, moral, and psychological factors.

Nations are not simply groups of people to be counted by the million, and assessed by that counting as though they were so many millions of sheep. Every nation, worthy to be called a nation, possesses a national spirit—it might almost be called a soul—and it is this spirit, far more than any material factor, which enables great things to be done. Economic resources, raw materials, financial wealth, a huge population—all these things are up to a point valuable aids to national greatness. But by themselves they cannot produce greatness. A small nation with a stalwart heart needs, it is true, a certain modicum of material strength to let it hold its own in the world. But it does not need very much.

History is filled with examples of great nations which have died—completely vanished without leaving any trace other than architectural splendours to remind us of civilizations that must have seemed in their day quite indestructible. The Chaldeans, the Medes, the Hittites, the Nilotic builders of the Pyramids, are among the many great nations who have left their tombstones all over the Middle East. They have left nothing else. The same holds good of Majendra-Daro in India or the stupendous metropolis of Angkor Wat in the Far East. We find the same in America, North, Central, and South, and in remote islands of the South Pacific. There we find stone relics of the Toltecs, Aztecs, Incas, Mayas, and other civilizations, whose names are not even known. All these in their day strutted as great empires of their own world. They all died, leaving little or nothing of their culture, traditions, or spirit to those who inhabited the lands which they had ruled.

Undoubtedly nations can die. But the death of a nation is not inevitable, like that of an individual. It is curious that, in more recent centuries, the complete extinction of great nations has become a much rarer phenomenon than in very ancient times. The Roman Empire, though its fall was catastrophic, yet lingered on as

two divided portions, one of which, in a sad mockery of greatness, may be said to have survived as the Holy Roman Empire till Napoleon gave it the *coup de grâce*. Even so, the spirit of Rome, unlike that of the Hittites and others, has lived on till today in the civilizations of Western Europe.

Coming to still more recent history we find astonishing cases of unquenchable vitality in the spirits of nations. The decrepit old Ottoman Empire disintegrated at the end of the First World War, but out of the ruins sprang the virile Turkish nation of today. Still more amazing were the two revivals of Germany after her defeats in 1918 and 1945. It seems that modern nations have a residual vitality of spirit which is far harder to kill completely than that of the very ancient empires. Perhaps this may be due to the fact that national spirit today resides in the hearts and minds of many people, the patriotic élite of that nation, whereas in ancient times it only resided in the ruler himself and his bodyguard.

Be the cause what it may, it certainly seems a fact worthy of general acceptance that the spirit of a modern nation ought to be and can be immortal, provided only that the nation itself does not change its basic composition. If more examples are needed, we have the rise of France after the Franco-Prussian War and her rise again in recent years after the humiliation of 1940. We have also the example of Spain, a proud and virile nation now on the upward grade again after a century or more of feebleness. Poland too is a fine example of how the spirit of a nation can live on through repeated partitions of the homeland and centuries of foreign rule.

What has all this to do with the British Empire? Simply this—that in seeking the causes of that magnificent empire's fall we must probe much deeper than most enquirers do. We must seek for seeds of decay in the spirit of the British nation itself—in the hearts and minds of the islanders whose ancestors established their influence and their way of life over so vast an empire.

Any such probe into the changing outlook of the British nation toward its imperial destiny is complicated by the fact that a nation of many millions does not think as one man. It would be a gross oversimplification to pretend that, at any period after the Spanish Armada, the entire English (or later British) nation thought unanimously on foreign policy. This does not mean that there were always traitors within the nation, though occasionally there were. There were, however, almost always a few genuine, if misguided, patriots, who sincerely believed that it was in the best interests of the country that they should oppose the official policy of king or government.

During the Stuart period these deviations were based on religious or dynastic conflicts of loyalty. Later, particularly after the American

secession and the French Revolution had set men's minds thinking on sociological lines, dissident minorities tended toward idealistic dreams of universal peace and the brotherhood of man. Philosophers and intellectual theorists tended to oppose the military, and even the commercial, ambitions of governments in the belief that aggressive patriotism of that kind was a primary cause of war.

It is important to remember that, in the early days at any rate, there was rarely any question of deliberate treason in the minds of these theorists. They were in many cases God-fearing, decent men. Cobden and Bright, for example, were men of the highest principles, respected and even liked by their fiercest opponents. They formed a sort of bridge of respectability between sober-minded middle-of-the-road men and extremists of the revolutionary type.

And yet these decent and moderate men and others like them were, in fact, the channel through which the enemies of everything British managed to pour into our nation the ideas which have rotted the whole formerly solid structure.

Biologists know that the line of demarcation between animal and vegetable life in the lowest forms of both is a very thin line. For example, decomposing vegetable matter, if left standing under certain conditions of warmth, light, and moisture, will become infested with maggots, worms, or other base forms of animal life. What really happens is that the rotting matter offers a favourable breeding ground for germs or seeds of decay carried in the air or otherwise imported. So it is with the seeds of decay in a formerly great nation.

Every nation, where free thought exists at all, is composed of strata of political opinion graded from the extremes of subversion at one end to jingoistic "my country, right or wrong" at the other end. Every great nation has external enemies, and it is a natural tactic of these enemies to pump destructive poison into the more readily subversive stratum of the victim in the usually well-founded hope that this poison will seep through the middle strata (dabblers in pacifism and pink internationalism) until eventually it permeates even the intelligentsia of the formerly patriotic right wing. Just as in biology so it is also in the history of nations. The decomposing vegetation is usually there, waiting to be germinated from outside.

An investigation into the causes of decay of such an institution as the British Empire must therefore take into account the following factors—the receptive seeding ground within the British structure, the channels through which the poison was able to spread, and the methods used by our external enemies for planting the seed and encouraging its growth.

The French Revolution and the great wars resulting from it left undercurrents of discontent all over Europe. Whereas these brought about violent clashes within most of the continental countries,

culminating in the year of revolutions (1848), Great Britain was fortunate in suffering only from comparatively mild demonstrations of unrest. The Luddites of the early nineteenth century limited their violence and their political aims to opposing the introduction of machinery to the factories. The fear of unemployment among manual workers was the sum total of their discontent. The larger and more formidable Chartist movement certainly alarmed the authorities in 1848 by its huge rally at Kennington and its threat to march on Whitehall. But their famous Charter, which caused such a stir at that time, reads as an extremely moderate battle-cry today. Out of the six demands incorporated in that document five have become normal features of our present parliamentary democracy.

This comparative gentleness of revolutionary movements in Great Britain may have been fortunate up to a point, but it had serious and hidden disadvantages. Firstly, the benevolence of British governments, as compared with the police régimes of the Continent, attracted to our shores large numbers of revolutionary refugees. Though in most cases they respected the law of hospitality sufficiently to desist from revolutionary violence against the land of their adoption, it was more than could be expected of human nature that they should suppress their own political ideas.

British law did not forbid exchanges of thought between one man and another provided that law and order were preserved. So the ideas, brought by the newcomers, were discussed, and criticized or approved, by British working men. Consequently, instead of mutual fear and suspicion between law-abiders and subversives producing a barrier against the flow of ideas, as happened on the Continent, no such barrier arose to separate the varying degrees of militancy latent in British political thought.

The effect of this absence of rigid mental barriers may have been slow, but in the long run it was perhaps more harmful to the British nation as a whole than would have been the existence of a violently revolutionary element, which would have stimulated the growth of a mental wall to keep destructive ideas away from the minds of moderate men. It is significant that Great Britain was the birthplace of the Fabian brand of socialism. Founded in 1884, the Fabian Society, with its doctrine of the inevitability of gradualness, proved to be a far more deadly weapon against Great Britain than any bomb-throwing anarchist or nihilist society could have been.

The comparative gentlemanliness of subversive movements in Great Britain found a sympathetic foil in the British tendency to hear the other man's point of view. Intellectuals of leftish tendency, far from being repelled by the more extreme radicals to the left of them, took a lively and friendly interest in the views of Chartists and others. For a long time it was social reform in its various aspects

that provided common ground for the extreme left and the intellectual centre. Little interest was taken during the early nineteenth century in what modern jargon now calls colonialism or imperialism. Left-wing reformers had their minds fixed firmly on internal affairs —the Corn Laws, the Reform Laws, and the problems of Ireland. So, for half a century, empire builders and administrators quietly pursued their tasks in distant lands without interference from misguided left-wingers at home.

Yet all through the century, like a poison spreading through an outwardly healthy body, the entire structure of British political thought was slowly and surely being permeated by leftist tendencies. A notable example of this process at work was the evolution of Mr. Gladstone himself. As a young man he entered Parliament as a Tory member of rather die-hard hue. His maiden speech was in favour of continuing slavery in the West Indies!

It is instructive to study his gradual metamorphosis into the distinctly radical Liberal leader of late Victorian days.

His case, though of interest owing to the prominence of this statesman, was by no means a peculiar phenomenon. Long before the foundation of the Labour Party there was a constant tendency for political opinion, whether Whig or Tory, to drift gradually leftward. At no time during the nineteenth century did any clear-cut distinction exist between right-wing Whigs and left-wing Tories. To confuse the issue still further, in proportion as the successive Reform Acts of that century gradually placed power into the hands of a wider and less educated electorate, the two big parties tended to stretch their political creeds to the utmost in the direction most likely to attract the newly enfranchised voters. Inevitably this meant a stretch toward the left, since reactionary measures seldom appeal to uneducated men.

"The inevitability of gradualness" was a well chosen phrase for the process which was to wreck the British Empire. It would be difficult to pinpoint the exact moment in Mr. Gladstone's career when he moved definitely from right to left. It would be hard to say at what date the old-fashioned Whig Party became Liberal. It is not easy to determine when the left-wing of that party became so radical as to facilitate the formation of new political movements to the left of Liberalism—to wit the Labour Party and the Independent Labour Party. A date of sorts can be given for each of these developments, but it is only the date when official announcement of the change was made. The process in each case was imperceptible and gradual.

Still more difficult is it to be precise about the first infiltration of leftist ideas into the Conservative mentality. It was as gradual and as insidious an operation as any of those just mentioned. This

in itself was remarkable, because the Conservative (or Tory) Party was, in the memory of many living today, outstanding as the patriotic party, the stronghold of those who believed in the British Empire and its civilizing mission. The achievement of those who engineered this infiltration was therefore all the more deadly in its effect. Those of us who can remember typical Tory meetings of 1906 or thereabouts find it difficult to recognize in the pale-pink outfit of today the Conservative Party of only sixty years ago.

The London School of Economics, inspired by Fabianism, was one of the implements used for this surgical operation upon the nation's political brain. Impregnation of the Civil Service with left-wing and eventually with anti-British thought was the first success of this institution. This was an important step because of the average Englishman's pathetic trust in experts—particularly in self-styled experts. Politicians, no matter how brilliant (as some of them have been) are inclined to regard themselves as amateurs in their dealings with departmental professionals. The political head of any department is, whether he realizes it or not, constantly liable to be swayed by the views of his senior officials if they belong to the permanent Civil Service. This rarely happens, curiously enough, when the cabinet minister's professional advisers belong to the fighting services. In such cases expert advice is usually disregarded or treated with deep suspicion, particularly if given by senior soldiers. This strange discrepancy in the relative trust of politicians for their military advisers probably dates from the period when Cromwell established a military dictatorship through the agency of major-generals.

Be this as it may, it has been unfortunate for the British Empire that our politicians' blind trust in permanent Civil Servants has not been tempered with a little of the scepticism which they seem to reserve for fighting men. For the hand of Fabian Socialism can be traced throughout the declining years of the British Empire. As will be seen in subsequent chapters, the rate of this decline became precipitous during the fatal thirteen years of Conservative administration (1951/1964). Though there may be other and more sinister explanations for this betrayal by a political party that was once the backbone of patriotism, a contributory cause of their conduct may well have been an excessive reliance on the opinions of Fabian-trained Civil Servants.

We have then the picture of a mighty empire steadily growing throughout the nineteenth century, unchallenged by the open enmity of any other great power, though obviously a source of jealousy to many of them. Though the Russian Empire, spreading across Central Asia toward India, caused anxiety to British states-

men during the latter half of the century and involved British troops in two invasions of Afghanistan, no open rupture occurred between the two great powers after the Crimean War had temporarily foiled Russian designs upon the Ottoman Empire. War nearly came again in 1878 and in 1885, but by 1907 the defeat of Russia in the Japanese war and the growing menace of Germany had reoriented Anglo-Russian relations into a Triple Entente with France.

In similar manner France had been regarded as a possible threat to British interests throughout most of the century. This culminated in the crisis of Fashoda (1898) after which Franco-British relations improved. The important point here is that during the heyday of the British Empire—Queen Victoria's reign—the balance of power among the great nations was such that British statemen misread the international portents. Russia and France seemed to be the principal menaces, if not indeed the only ones. The steady growth of Germany, though clearly indicated by her wars against Denmark (1864) Austria (1866) and France (1870), did not even begin to alarm Whitehall until the turn of the century. As far as *foreign* affairs were concerned, those who were responsible for watching against coming dangers had their eyes focused on two danger spots of minor imminence. As far as concerned *internal* threats to the Empire—namely the seeds of decay within the British nation itself—a similar misreading of the portents occurred with even more serious consequences.

As a natural result of the French Revolution and the massive upheavals of the Napoleonic Wars, the rulers of Europe from 1815 till the middle of the century were obsessed with fears of great popular risings, backed by the lower strata of society. The Year of Revolutions (1848) did in fact show that these fears were justified in so far as concerned the continental nations of Europe. Later the utterances of Karl Marx and Engels focused the attention of the authorities, responsible for security, more intently than ever upon this bogy of a proletarian revolution.

But, however real a menace proletarian unrest may have been on the Continent, in Great Britain, even during the revolutionary year 1848, it never was the principal internal menace. The much publicized and much feared Chartist demonstration of 1848 in London proved to be a comparatively damp squib.

More often than not it has been the intellectual and educated classes of *any* country rather than the ignorant masses who have caused the downfall of existing political or social systems. Mrs. Nesta Webster in her book, *The Surrender of an Empire*, states that the ruling class of a country can never be destroyed unless it concurs in its own destruction. She gives many instances of this, including the French Revolution itself, and she quotes Gustave le

Bon as having said "The people may make riots but never revolutions".

This is a profound truth which alone can explain one of the greatest mysteries of modern times—namely the reason why such a mighty entity as the British Empire has crumbled within the brief space of one human generation. For throughout our study of that decline and collapse we shall find that it was the educated middle classes of Great Britain and *not* the working class who first became infected with the germs of anti-patriotism, internationalism, defeatism, moral degeneracy, religious agnosticism and similar poisons of the character and mind.

Cleavage between rich and poor, noble and peasant, ruler and ruled, has never been as rigid among nations of the British Isles as among some of the continental nations. This has partly been due to our insularity, but also derives from the existence of a healthy spirit of self-respect and mutual respect among high and low. Even in feudal times the working classes, though they may have been serfs, were never servile. English, Scottish, or Irish kings were never treated by their subjects as aloof demi-gods but rather as protectors of the common people against baronial tyranny. Thus, despite occasional subversions, the common people of Great Britain have always been yeomen rather than proletarians in their outlook, and have usually retained a sturdy patriotism, even when ruffled by some social or economic discontent.

The undermining of the British national character which caused the ignominious and apparently sudden collapse of British greatness was undoubtedly the work of foreign enemies. Who these were and how they worked will be discussed in later chapters. Here we are concerned only with those parts of our nation that proved vulnerable to the injection of decadent thought. The Achilles' heel of our nation was found among the high-browed intellectuals, sprung largely from urban and suburban families, who filled the civil and administrative services of the rapidly growing Empire.

It was among this stratum of society that the poison first took root, attaching itself more readily, of course, to intellects unprotected by any strong background of patriotism or tradition. For a while the spread of this poison throughout the educated classes was hindered by the existence of a solid barrier—the squirearchy or English country gentry and their near neighbours the farming yeomanry. These social classes represented something hardly found at all in the social structures of most other nations.

Situated comfortably between the landowning nobility on the one hand and the manual workers on the other, and generally on very friendly terms with both, these two classes long formed the backbone of British patriotic tradition. By British law and the cus-

tom of primogeniture only the eldest son of a noble family succeeded to the title and estates of his ancestors. England in consequence was spared from the multitude of princelings, counts, or minor types of nobility who overcrowded the fashionable salons of certain other lands. Younger sons of distinguished English families had to be content with plain "Mister", and were happy to settle down as country gentlemen to raise sons of their own in the traditions of old England.

The education which these sons received was that of character rather than brain. Intellectually they rarely attained to the scholastic standards of some of their contemporaries, whose background was different. But, with all their faults, the family life and country pursuits of these "younger sons of younger sons" produced the right sort of men to help in the building and maintenance of the Empire. More important still, it produced a solid phalanx of staunch patriotic sentiment (though they would rather have been seen dead than to have been heard boasting about it) which for many years served as an effective barrier to the spread of decadent ideas throughout the administrative and educated middle classes.

Their near neighbours, both socially and in outlook, were the yeoman families of the English countryside. Just as tongue-tied in verbal expression of patriotic sentiments, the yeomen of England were perhaps an even more solid obstacle to the spread of degenerate ideas. To an observer of the British social scene in the last few years of Queen Victoria's reign it might well have seemed that the British spirit which built the Empire would be handed down from father to son for ever—at any rate among the rural communities. But that observer could not have foreseen the Great War of 1914-18, which wiped out the cream of England's young men, leaving their places to be filled by others—worthy young men in their way no doubt, but not so fortified by background or upbringing to withstand the insidious drip of the new ideas imported from abroad and already implanted in the minds of many leftist intellectuals.

As a result of the holocaust of young officers in the battles of the Western Front the teaching profession, like all other outlets for leadership, had to fall back upon men of a different type to fashion the post-war generations of schoolboys.

Scholastically the new men were probably superior to their predecessors, but they naturally could not pass on to their pupils aspects of character-training which they had not themselves experienced. Their task, even had they tried to fulfil it in the old way, was rendered more difficult by the widespread questioning of religious beliefs which the war had brought about. Even some devout Christians found it difficult to reconcile their creed with the horrors of the trenches. The old faith was no longer implicitly held

by large numbers of people whose parents had been unquestioning in the faith.

This decline of religious faith was not however entirely due to the disillusionment caused by the 1914 war. The first damage to Christianity's influence upon the British character can be traced to the Newcastle Commission on education in 1858 and to the series of Education Acts, sponsored mainly by the Liberal Party, which gradually secularized state-controlled education until, in the first decade of the twentieth century, the part allotted to religious teaching in state schools was reduced to almost farcical proportions.

Within a generation the results of the abandonment of this side of human education transformed the English nation (for the Scots had wisely retained sound religious teaching in their school curricula) from being a devout Christian nation into an almost pagan one. For, within a generation, children who had received practically no religious teaching had themselves become parents. Naturally they were incapable of passing on any religion to their children. Meanwhile the state-controlled schools had become staffed largely by schoolteachers of the newly adult generation, who themselves had never received any religious grounding. Nature abhors a vacuum in education as well as in all other spheres. The void left by lack of religious thought was quickly filled for many of these untaught teachers by an aggressive agnosticism, which they duly passed on to their pupils.

Thus two strong barriers against degeneracy of character had been undermined and demolished—first the Christian Faith, the greatest of all ingredients of the British character in its prime, and secondly those old fashioned patriots, the countrymen of England—gentry, yeomanry, and cottagers—who had flocked to enlist in 1914-15 and had been decimated at Loos, on the Somme, and at Passchendael.

With these props swept away the British (and particularly the English) became vulnerable to every form of moral and mental poison: a contempt for all that their ancestors had held sacred or noble, a masochistic shame for the magnificent achievements of their empire-building predecessors, and a miserable defeatism, which accepted almost gladly the lying propaganda of our country's enemies, who derided us as a down and out nation with no hope except to surrender our independence and our very existence into the hands of foreigners. As a counter-weight to these negative thoughts our brain-washed people transferred their interests to loathsome vices, rightly spurned by our forefathers. Sodomy, concerning which the Bible does not mince its words, has by modern thinkers been given the more genteel name of homesexuality. As such it is defended by our bishops and other "leaders of the people". It is the pet theme of modern authors and playwrights and is given generous and sympathetic publicity by the B.B.C.

Is it surprising that a nation which has sunk so low has allowed its great Empire to disintegrate?

It remains for us now to see how this poison seeped throughout our nation so insidiously and gently that for many years the giant remained outwardly as robust as ever. It remains for us to investigate who planted this poison in our midst, for nothing grows, however receptive the soil, unless an outside agency has planted it. Finally we will study what must be done to restore health and vigour to our nation.

8

PAX BRITANNICA

BEFORE commencing the sad story of the British Empire's dissolution it will be as well to remind ourselves of the size and nature of the noble structure that was so quickly to be torn to pieces by small-minded and misguided men.

Queen Victoria's death in 1901 marked the turning point in British destiny. Her empire covered more than a quarter of the earth's surface and her subjects were numbered in the same proportion. It was an understatement to claim that the sun never set upon the British Empire, for there was scarcely any fraction of British territory where the sun's rays even slanted below the yard-arm before high noon had been reached in some more western piece of the empire.

It was an empire not merely huge in size but scattered in its lay-out and, above all, extremely varied in its nature.

It consisted, not of one enormous land mass, like the present Soviet Union or the United States of America. There were no less than five very large land masses sprawling round the globe and separated from one another by oceans—namely the large and compact territories of Canada, India, Australia, the long ribbon of British Africa from Cairo to the Cape, and New Zealand. These five huge blobs of red were the first details to catch the eyes of a schoolboy in the turn of the century, as he looked at one of the great Navy League wall maps of the world that used to adorn most British schools. But, if he looked a little closer, he would quickly see something else. There was hardly any stretch of the world's busiest maritime trade routes without its little splashes of red spaced out along it. In the three biggest and busiest oceans—the Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian—a large proportion of islands were shown to be British territory. Where trade routes left the great oceans and entered a narrower sea, such as the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf or the Red Sea, there too some minute red mark indicated the presence of a British strategic base.

Quite apart from the territories actually marked in red, a very large portion of the globe—both land and sea though outside the Empire itself—was quietly and unobtrusively regarded by the

British and recognized by most other people as being a British sphere of influence. Such, for example was the vast area of sea and land that stretched from Port Said to Singapore. Only a portion of the land area may have been shown in red on a map, and the seas were theoretically the preserve of no particular nation but a public thoroughfare for all. Yet an observant liner-passenger, travelling eastward from Suez, could hardly fail to sense British predominance in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. In the former he would pass within sight of barren islets, apparently uninhabited but for lighthousemen. The enquiring traveller would learn that, although the lighthousemen were usually Greeks or Egyptians, it was the British who had put the lighthouses there, and who supervised the entire service.

If lucky, this traveller might witness a sight that he would never forget— the pursuit and capture of an Arab slave-trading dhow by a sloop of the British or Indian navies and the rescue of several hundred negroes, packed tight on the open deck of the dhow, on their way to the slave markets of Arabia. This was a service to humanity which is too often forgotten by the loud-mouthed spokesmen of recently emancipated African states.

If this traveller ventured a little off the main steamer route into the Persian Gulf, there too he would find the British and Indian navies at work. But here it was gun-running rather than slave-trading that needed their constant attention. It may well be said that suppression of gun-runners was primarily a British interest, since most of the rifles were on their way to those ever eager customers—the Pathan tribes of the Indian North-West Frontier. This is true up to a point, but none the less suppression of both these nefarious activities, slaving and arms smuggling, directly benefited millions of humble villagers in Africa and Asia. This was the *Pax Britannica* at work and at its best.

Much the same held good in regions far from the sea throughout this undeclared but recognized sphere of British influence. In those great days a traveller could penetrate far into the dying Ottoman Empire, or into Arabia, Persia, Afghanistan, or even into Tibet, without feeling that he had left this intangible British influence entirely behind him. It is true that local rulers and tribesmen more often than not paid scanty allegiance to any power but Allah and themselves, but nearly all of them had a healthy respect for the great Queen-Empress—that almost legendary lady who ruled the whole of India—and for the "sahib-log" who represented her in various capacities. It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of this factor, respect for the British "sahib-log", in relation to all other factors that held the Asiatic and African parts of the Empire in contentment and peace for so many years.

The underdeveloped territories of the British Empire were kept

happy and loyal by one factor above all others—the fact that millions of humble cultivators trusted and respected the white men, sent out from Great Britain to teach and rule them.

Many examples could be given of this wonderful hold upon the affections and respect of simple folk, which was so often won by some solitary Englishman or Scot, placed in charge of an area half the size of England. Outstanding achievements of this kind were those of Lawrence and his little band of assistants, among whom were Edwardes, Abbott, and the great John Nicholson. In 1849 this picked group of administrators took charge of the Punjab, which had just been annexed by the British after the bloody and bitter Second Sikh War. The huge country was infested by hordes of disbanded Sikh soldiers, deprived of much back-pay and knowing no trade but war. There was bitter hatred toward the white conquerors and toward the sepoys of the East India Company's armies. Bankruptcy in the cities, large scale brigandage in the rural districts, terror and insecurity everywhere. But above all a fierce hatred for the British. That was the general situation when Lawrence and his subordinates moved in. Yet, in less than eight years, when the Bengal Army mutinied and threw all India into turmoil from the Sutlej to Calcutta and from the Himalayas to the Deccan, the one part of British India that remained loyal was the Punjab. The one race who rushed to enlist on the British side to fight the mutineers was the Sikhs. It is doubtful whether in the whole of human history half a dozen men have converted a whole nation from enmity to loyal friendship in so short a time.

One could go on for ever, for their name is legion—these men among men to whom, in large measure, was entrusted the building and maintenance of the British Raj in troublous times and in the wilder parts.

But it was not only a matter of courage and leadership in acute emergency. This respect of subject peoples for the British was based just as much upon long and patient service by district commissioners, political officers, and civilians of all sorts on lonely and responsible duty for year after year in a climate that would have degenerated lesser men.

Two points may be mentioned as illustrating this good name of the British. The Indian Mutiny was a ferocious war of atrocities and reprisals. One would expect such a war to have left behind it a legacy of mutual hatred between the British and some at least of the Indian races. Nothing of the kind occurred. The almost ridiculously small size of the British garrison in India during the century which followed the Mutiny, and the comparative absence of political unrest in the provinces inhabited by the fighting races, provides unimpeachable proof that British rule in India depended, during the

last century of its existence, upon mutual goodwill between rulers and ruled and *not* upon military oppression. It is significant that the one big exception to this was Bengal—a country whose people have never excelled as soldiers but have produced large numbers of barrack-room lawyers, in other words, semi-educated English-speaking baboos with bees in their bonnets. Because the Indian Mutiny was primarily an affair of sepoys of the *Bengal* Army, a mistaken impression has arisen among people, unfamiliar with Indian military history, that these mutinous sepoys were Bengalis. The fact is that, although a part of the East India Company's forces was named the Bengal Army, there was probably not a Bengali in it. This army comprised soldiers of India's traditionally martial races—Hindustanis from Oudh, Mahrattas, Rajputs, Rohillas, and Afghan mercenaries. There were a few Sikh units, but these for the most part remained loyal to the British.

Most of the political unrest in India during the post-Mutiny period came in fact from the unmilitary and loquacious Bengalis and *not* from the fighting races, who had far more excuse to have retained feelings of bitterness, arising from the passions of the Mutiny. Unrest was stimulated too among the urban and industrial populations of Bombay, Ahmednagar, and similar communities but to the last there was practically no ill feeling at all toward the British among the rural villages, where the preponderant mass of India's people live. Not even in Bengal were the rural districts anti-British, except when they were intimidated into subversion by agitators from the cities.

The second pointer to the true secret of British success in holding down the Asiatics and Africans may be found in the small matter of financial trust. In the great days of Queen Victoria it was quite an easy matter for an Englishman, travelling far from civilization, to obtain a replenishment of ready money, though he himself might be personally unknown in that district. In the smallest village some shopkeeper would hand over several hundred rupees on the strength of a simple written promise to repay. In those days an Englishman's word was his bond and this was enough.

This trustful attitude survived in remoter parts as late as the nineteen-thirties. The abbot of a large Buddhist monastery in a remote valley of Tibet, to this writer's personal knowledge, and only a few years before the Second World War, cheerfully parted with seven hundred rupees (over £50) in this casual way.

This complete trust in the word of a sahib unfortunately became shaken in the cities and sophisticated districts of India toward the end of the 1914-18 war. Too many dud cheques were foisted upon trusting merchants or bankers. This was just one sign of the fatal spread of that moral and mental poison, emanating from a hid-

den source, which had first undermined a few degenerate modernists in Great Britain and, through them, had permeated large numbers of our formerly honourable middle class.

Meanwhile the enfeeblement of our old-fashioned but robust imperialist mentality, which the Webbs had begun to undermine by founding the London School of Economics in 1895, had almost exterminated the breed of colonial administrators of earlier days. Our chief universities no longer taught patriotism or robust notions concerning the white man's duty in backward parts of the world.

A new kind of colonial administrator was emerging—earnest no doubt and scholarly, but no longer confident of the rightness and importance of his task as a ruler, guide, and helper for less fortunate peoples. Simultaneously with this Fabian undermining of the political sphere, another and more vicious undermining of old-fashioned British moral standards was being conducted by other means. Agnosticism created the mental vacuum into which dangerous ideas were poured by those who had no love for Great Britain. Psychiatry, intellectual anarchy, and a curious form of inverted snobbery, all combined to create in the minds of the new generations a feeling that the ancient moralities were as outmoded as the ancestral religion. Dishonesty became euphemized into smart practice. The divisions between right and wrong no longer seemed so clear.

Several times during the nineteen-thirties this writer was asked the following question by loyal but puzzled Indians—decent, thoughtful men of good standing in their own communities—maliks of Pathan tribes, headmen of Punjabi villages, religious leaders of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, or the Khalsa. The question was put in various ways, but its general drift was always the same. "What," these anxious leaders of the real rural India used to ask, "has become of the old kind of sahibs? The young men of today are very different from the sahibs that we used to know."

These elders of rural India had instinctively put their finger on a contributory cause of British loss of influence. The men of strong personality, who in former times had spent most of their time in the saddle, or trekking across mountains or jungle, in order to get to know their district and to be known personally by its inhabitants, had by the nineteen-thirties been replaced by a different product of our universities—by scholastic office workers, bespectacled and earnest—whose faces were often quite unknown in the more remote villages.

And—worse even than this—the increased influx of white men to India during the war, and in the commercial development which followed, had brought dud cheques and other irreparable damage to the good name of the British. This loss of "izzat" might have been only temporary if time had been allowed to us to regain the trust

and respect of the rural millions. But no time was allowed. The enemies of the British Empire were quick to take advantage of it.

So much for the situation in what was sometimes called the dependent portion of the empire—the Indian Empire and its dependencies, the larger crown colonies in Asia, Africa, America, and the Pacific Ocean, the protectorates, the mandates held in trusteeship for the United Nations, and the vaguely defined spheres of influence outside the Empire proper. In all these territories the foregoing remarks about moral leadership in India apply with equal truth. The whole vast system was held together by respect for the British and *not* by armed force.

But the British Empire as a whole contained two categories of territories of very different natures to the dependent empire. First came the white self-governing dominions, Canada, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand.

Profiting from the tragic lesson of the American breakaway, Great Britain had always studiously avoided any tendency to govern the white settlers of these new lands from Whitehall. A partial exception had been South Africa, where the path of white nation-building had been complicated by two factors (*a*) the existence of two white settler communities (British and Boer) and (*b*) the presence of powerful and warlike tribes. The long and fascinating history of the Boer trek northward, to escape from British rule, of their founding of the two republics, of their wars with the Matabele and Zulus, of their troubles with the Uitlanders, and of the Jameson Raid, culminated during Queen Victoria's final years in the great Boer War and the unification of South Africa. But at that point in history the lesson of 1783 was remembered. Great Britain restored their independence to the two Boer republics to enable them to combine with Natal and the Cape Province in the Union of South Africa, a new self-governing dominion on the same footing as Canada and the others. Whatever may be thought of British dealings with the Boers up to that moment, it cannot be denied that the restoration of Boer independence and the foundation of the Union was a wise and statesmanlike step.

Compared with the teething troubles of South Africa, nothing of grave importance rippled the flow of the other white dominions from colonial status to nationhood. Despite the presence of French and British settlers, Canada has, up till the present day, avoided the bi-national and bi-lingual frictions suffered by South Africa. The present extraordinary phenomenon of Quebequois separatism is something which must be studied in due course. Australia and New Zealand, having been settled primarily by British emigrants, had simpler nation-building problems.

The various dates on which these white nations of the empire

were born, are as follows: Canada 1867, Australia 1901, New Zealand 1907, South Africa 1909 (though discussions began in 1906). Thus by 1910 the British Empire contained within itself five white nations (counting Great Britain herself). Four of these, still called dominions for some years, were in effect as individually independent as the mother country, though diplomatic recognition of this fact was not established until the signature of the Statute of Westminster in 1931.

There was a brief period when bold and imaginative statesmanship could have moulded these five nations, by some form of federation, into one nation which could have been just as united and possessive of solidarity as the United States of America or the Soviet Union. The argument that distance might have been an insuperable obstacle need never have been treated seriously. It is true that both the United States and the Soviet Union form compact and contiguous land masses, whereas the five British nations are separated by oceans. But, at the time when imperial federation was first mooted, Britannia did indeed still rule the waves, and fast liner traffic was already beginning to render intercommunication between the five not appreciably slower than the time-lag between St. Petersburg and Vladivostock. Development of transoceanic cables and the new Marconi telegraphy too were already providing statesmen of the five nations with facilities for rapid contact.

The real proof that imperial federation could have been achieved, given the necessary vision and determination among statesmen, is to be seen in the promptness with which all the Dominions came to the help of the mother country in the crises of 1914 and 1939.

Why did the early schemes for imperial federation, or imperial preferences in trade, come to nothing? And secondly, is it too late, even now, for a new plan for imperial federation to succeed? These important questions will be discussed fully in a later chapter. At present it is enough to emphasize that the early failure was due to pressures exerted from outside the British Empire and to remind ourselves that any new scheme for federation will have to contend with vigorous opposition from the same inimical foreign source.

Beside the white dominions and the vast dependent empire there was a third constituent, small in area but great in importance—the chain of strategic naval bases, the most important of which were Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, Aden, Singapore, and Hong Kong. For simplicity in consideration of this aspect of empire perhaps it may be permissible, though pedantically incorrect, to add the names of certain centres of the oil industry—Abadan, Kuwait, Bahrein, and other small but important oil places in the Persian Gulf. Abadan, of course, never was British territory and the others merely accepted

British protection, retaining their own local independence. But to all practical purposes these places were as important to our oil-burning sea power as were any of the naval stations themselves.

In addition to their value in naval strategy there were two other points of resemblance covering all these places. Each one of them was small in extent. Each one of them owed its prosperity—indeed its very existence in several cases—to British enterprise.

Gibraltar is unlikely ever to have become the flourishing port and town that it is today if it had remained in Spanish hands, simply because Spain already possessed nearby the fine harbour and city of Cádiz. Malta might well have shared the obscure and romantic poverty of many another Mediterranean island, had it not become a British naval base. As to Aden, Singapore, and Hong Kong, their very existence as flourishing densely populated places is due entirely to Great Britain. Aden was an outcrop of barren rocks, almost uninhabited. Singapore was an unhealthy and swampy island. Hong Kong another outcrop of rocks, infested mainly by Chinese pirates. But, of all the places changed by British enterprise into prosperous communities, Abadan perhaps holds first place. This morsel of Persia was no more than an uninhabited mudflat, seasonally submerged by the flood-waters of three rivers. In July 1909 one square mile of this desolation was purchased from the Sheik of Muhammara by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. By 1945 its population had risen to more than 130,000 and the refineries gave employment to over 55,000, mainly Persians, in a place where a goat could not have found a living forty years earlier.

The transformation of all these small and once derelict places into thriving commercial centres is typical of what has happened wherever the Union Jack has flown. With the possible exception of Ireland there is no corner of the world that has not benefited very considerably from a period of British rule. Let us take, for example, Egypt, a land from which the world is treated today to a constant stream of vituperative anti-British propaganda. In 1876 the government of Khedive Ismail was declared bankrupt. Egyptian felaheen were among the most wretched of mankind. Egyptian manpower had for some years been squandered (as under Nasser's Yemeni adventure today) upon useless military commitments as far south as Lake Victoria Nyanza. During the long period 1876-1952 during which Great Britain exercised, in one form or another, an influence upon Egyptian administration, that country was restored from bankruptcy to her ancient fertility and prosperity, and incidentally was twice defended by British troops against annexation by a far more tyrannous master than the British had ever been.

Ireland, it must be admitted, is perhaps the one exception. But even here, in extenuation, it should be remembered that the causes

of Ireland's troubles lay far back in English history—in the days of Cromwell, when savagery between Roman Catholics and Protestants was commonplace throughout Europe. The bitterness of those days produced, in effect, two nations in Ireland instead of one —namely the Protestant settlers and their descendants, from whom sprang the absentee landlords of later days, and the original Irish peasantry, who most certainly were unfairly treated by the English Government, mainly on account of religion. It is, however, a remarkable fact that, in spite of all the past bitterness between the two countries, thousands of Irishmen still persist in coming over to live and work in England. But a serious effect of the old troubles has been that Irish-Americans carried to their new country a bitterness against Great Britain which has intensified the anti-British atmosphere, already permeating a large part of American sentiment ever since the break-away.

Such was the British Empire when Queen Victoria died and so it continued, outwardly unchanged, invulnerable, and contented, right on till the end of the Second World War. It finished that war on the brink of financial collapse, thanks to the unstinted efforts of the whole Empire to resist German domination of the world, when nothing at all stood in the way of that domination except Great Britain and the Empire. For a total of nearly four years in the two great wars the British had carried the entire burden, for in both wars America had kept out of the fighting in the early and dangerous periods. In both wars Great Britain had been let down by an important ally—France in the second war and Russia in the first. It was not surprising, and it was certainly no matter for shame, that by 1945 the British Empire had been strained almost to breaking point.

Yet, in spite of her financial exhaustion and (except in Asia, where the astounding Japanese successes had damaged the prestige of all white nations) in spite of her early military disasters in Europe, the prestige of Great Britain remained second to none among the allied and victorious nations. Except for the Palestine mandate, where the Zionists were repaying former British help by a campaign of murder, terrorism, and sabotage, the rest of the British-ruled world was quiet and apparently contented. The Indian North-West Frontier, that notorious trouble spot, was quieter than it had been for many years. In India itself the vaunted Indian National Army, a product of Japanese propaganda and pressure among Indian prisoners of war, had sadly disappointed its progenitors. Elsewhere the amount of anti-British feeling or political unrest amounted to no more than the babbling of a few agitators. Throughout the Empire the great masses of simple country-folk seemed *and were* just as "pathetically contented" as ever and just as happily loyal to the Empire.

And yet, within the brief space of less than twenty years, so we are asked to believe, all the subject nations of the Empire from Singapore to British Guiana and from Cyprus to the Cape suddenly with one accord got it into their heads that they must demand their freedom from British rule. To ask rational people, who knew the Empire and its peoples, to believe this is to ask altogether too much of human credulity, even if proof to the contrary were not available. In actual fact proof in abundance is available to show that this alleged urge of the peoples for independence was in most cases a figment of left-wing imagination or, in places where the peoples did manifest some interest in political independence, they had been deliberately pushed into doing this by means which we will investigate shortly.

The disintegration, within the space of twenty years, of a huge and hitherto stable and contented empire, which had taken two or three hundred years to build, is surely a phenomenon calling for explanation. Still more astonishing is it that this shattering historical event took place so smoothly and with so little fuss that millions of British voters failed to notice that anything queer was going on. The successive stages of the operation were so discreetly publicized that at no point of the grim tragedy was the British public roused to anger or alarm. The proud term British Empire was quietly dropped out of use and replaced by the term British Commonwealth. It was such a small point that only a few obstinate die-hards raised a word of protest. They were answered by the fatuous statement that the British Empire was "not breaking up—merely growing up". A little while later, when the change of name had been tacitly accepted by public opinion, the prefix British was dropped, and we became just the Commonwealth—a title which (as its inventors foresaw) could mean anything or precisely nothing.

9

THE PROCESS OF BETRAYAL

THE late Mrs. Nesta Webster, in her book *The Surrender of an Empire*, has disclosed very fully and with ample documentation the influences at work against the British Empire up to 1931. There is nothing that need be added to that scholarly and conscientious study within its chronological limits. But much—very much indeed—has happened to the Empire since her book was published. The most disquieting fact of British history in recent years is the fact that the British Empire emerged from the Second World War territorially intact (with the one exception of Ireland), and with its prestige enhanced rather than diminished despite its financial straits and its early disasters. Intelligent world opinion, particularly in Europe, recognized that, if it had not been for the British in 1940 and 1941, Nazism would have conquered the world. In 1945 British prestige and influence among the nations was as high as it has ever been.

The first shattering blow was the unnecessary, or at any rate the disastrously premature, withdrawal from India under Mr. Attlee's post-war government. This was quickly followed by the surrender of the Palestine mandate—again by the same Labour government. But, apart from these scuttles, the British Empire still remained in being when the Conservative Party commenced its thirteen years of power in 1951. *During those thirteen years of government by this right-wing party, whose declared policy, till then, had always included the maintenance of the British Empire, the entire Empire was disintegrated.*

It is reasonably certain that a vast majority of voters, who put the Tories into power in 1951, did so in the firm hope and belief that the dissolution of the Empire, started in India by the Socialists, would cease forthwith. Sir Winston Churchill had told Mr. Roosevelt, a few years previously, that he had not been appointed Prime Minister of Great Britain in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire. It was reasonable for voters to suppose that the party which he had led shared its great leader's sentiments, particularly when it is remembered that the Conservative Party manifesto for the 1951 election had contained no hint whatsoever of any intention of destroying the Empire.

The debacle of the thirteen years 1951-1964 constitutes an act of betrayal by the right-wing leadership of Great Britain—an act of betrayal for which the right-wing electorate as a whole must forever carry a great deal of blame.

Mrs. Webster's book has shown clearly how left-wing politicians and intellectuals had for many years worked with this destructive object in view. She has shown clearly (what people with practical experience of India and Africa had always known) that the humble masses of the people in those lands had no desire whatsoever to terminate British rule. Even the chief exponents of imperial disruption realized this themselves, and frankly admitted it. Mr. E. Samuel Montague, Secretary of State for India in 1924, and the left-wing viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, in their notorious *Montague-Chelmsford Report* on the Indian political situation, made use of these astonishingly candid words:

"They (i.e., the masses of India, after experiencing British rule) sank into a condition of lethargic content. . . . As for the idea of self-government, it is simply a planet that has not yet risen above their horizon. . . . Now we have to tear up that faith by the roots. . . . We have to bring about the most radical revolution in the people's traditional ideas of the relation between ruler and ruled, and it will be a difficult and even dangerous business, for it is neither safe nor easy to meddle with traditional ideas in India.

"The number of Indians who really ask for free institutions does not exceed five per cent of the population . . . (but) . . . we are not setting about to stir 95 per cent of the people out of their peaceful conservatism and setting their feet upon a new and difficult path merely at the bidding of the other five per cent. Our reason is the faith that is in us.

"We believe profoundly that the time has now come when the sheltered existence, which we have given India, cannot be prolonged without damage to her national life. . . . That the placid pathetic contentment of the masses is not the soil on which such Indian nationhood should grow, and that in deliberately disturbing it we are working for her highest good."

These words ought to be recorded in every book that aims to study and explain the world's social and political upheavals. For here we have, in the very words of two prominent intellectual progressives, their confession of faith and their excuse for taking a contented and well-governed country and plunging it into the unrest and intimidation which culminated, twenty-three years later, in the massacre of unknown millions of India's "pathetically contented" peasantry—Hindus, Musulmans, and Sikhs, butchering one another wholesale. And why? Because the British had abandoned their sacred trust of governing India well. Because of a train of events set in

motion by two foolish idealists, Messrs. Montague and Chelmsford. And why did these two idealists embark upon this dangerous course of action? We have the reason in their own words. It was because of "the faith that is in us".

It was not because they thought that Indians wanted to be self-governing. Oh no. These idealists knew quite well that Indians wanted no such thing. It was done simply to prove to these two political dreamers (and others like them) that their pet theory was worth a practical trial. For this they destroyed the British Raj in India and condemned millions to massacre and misery.

Terrible as it is to realize that there exist such people, who can cause such havoc just to try out a dangerous dream, it is at least understandable that *left-wing* intellectuals, by their very nature, must be expected to behave in this way. The antidote to subversive activity by left-wing intellectuals should be, and normally has been up till modern times, a counteracting firmness on the part of *right-wing* intellectuals in defence of good government, stability, and plain common sense.

From the left must always be expected dangerous and cranky experiments, surrenders of authority to mob rule, and a tendency to encourage, comfort, and help in every instance the enemies of Great Britain. From the right our country and the Empire ought to have been assured of a stalwart defence of all that was being undermined by cranks and enemies.

The Surrender of an Empire, about which Mrs. Webster wrote, had in reality hardly begun in 1931. The Empire still stood, capable, at a heavy price, of saving the free world from Nazism. The acts of betrayal which she described were almost exclusively the acts of left-wingers. She was spared the grief and humiliation of seeing that suposedly patriotic party, the Conservatives, bringing the whole imperial edifice crashing to the ground in the space of thirteen shameful years.

Why did they do this? It is a question that need not be asked in the case of *left-wing* empire-breakers. But there must have been a deep and perhaps sinister reason for Great Britain's former pillars of the Empire to continue and even to hasten the work of disruption, commenced by the left-wing "little Englanders".

Not one of the reasons, commonly put forward by Conservative apologists, is worth a moment's consideration. They have said that it was done in response to some compelling clamour for freedom, expressed by the subject races of the Empire. There never has been any such clamour. Even the left-wing idealists, Montague and Lord Chelmsford, knew that this was nonsense. Some have said that this surrender of empire was "inevitable" either because of this alleged clamour for "freedom" by the millions or else because of the irrepress-

ible guerrilla warfare which movements such as the Mau-mau of Kenya or the Eoka of Cyprus were able to carry out.

The first of these excuses needs no answer, as there has never been any spontaneous popular clamour. The second comes nearer to the truth, though still invalid as an excuse for surrender. It is true enough that in many parts of the Empire terrorist gangs have given British security forces considerable trouble and, at the same time, have succeded in producing a plausible appearance of anti-British public feeling by intimidating the ordinary people to act this part. Besides the Mau-mau and Eoka, already mentioned, there have been the Fenians and Sinn Fein in Ireland, the Bande Mataram in Bengal, the Red Shirts in North-West India, and the Communists in Malaya, to say nothing of less notorious but equally effective terrorists elsewhere. Intimidation by gangs of terrorists was, it will be remembered, a distinctive feature of North American unrest in the early stages of the revolt of the thirteen colonies (See Chapter IV). It is significant that the Fenian Society and other Irish terrorist organizations started among the Irish-Americans of the United States, and that American aid and moral support have in recent years frequently been given to anti-British terrorism.

This form of guerrilla war is admittedly very difficult to handle. But there is no doubt whatever that it can be handled and suppressed, given a sound plan of action and determination on the part of the forces of law and order to carry the plan through to the bitter end. Communist operations of this kind in Malaya were stopped by Field-Marshal Sir Gerald Templar. Lord Kitchener put an end to the guerilla warfare of the Boers by his system of barbed wire and blockhouses. Ruthlessness will always stop guerrilla war. At the other extreme kid-glove methods invariably fail.

There is always, however, a happy mean between undesirable brutality and excessive squeamishness, and British commanders and their troops can be relied upon to find the effective answer if only they are given the task by politicians and then left to carry it out. But this has never been the way of British politicians in the latter years of imperial decline. Cyprus was a case in point.

It has been reported that the total casualties suffered by British troops during the Eoka campaign amounted to about 400 killed. If this figure is even approximately correct it must surely have been the first occasion in history when a great power has accepted defeat in a war after suffering only such trifling casualties. To say this casts no reflection upon the troops or their commanders.

It was the British Government, *not* the fighting men, who gave up the struggle and allowed Grivas and a few terrorists to kick the British out of Cyprus.

Mr. Macmillan, in his notorious "wind of change" speech,

sounded the knell of white rule in Africa on the grounds that black insurgence was irresistible. Yet Portugal, militarily a much weaker country than Great Britain, has up till now (1965) defied both Mr. Macmillan's gloomy warnings and the worst that the "freedom fighters" (or terrorists) of black Africa have been able to do in Angola, Mozambique, and Portuguese Guinea. If Portugal could do this why could we not do the same in Kenya? Need a great imperial power really have been driven out by Mau-mau—a few savages armed only with pangas?

Apologists for scuttle on the argument of *force majeure* forget that a few hundred white mercenaries have marched all over the seething Congo Republic and, wherever they went, have restored to that gigantic country the only vestiges of law and order to have been seen there since the Belgians left.

When they find *force majeure* an untenable argument, apologists for scuttle fall back on the moral argument that it is not right for white men to rule over coloured ones. It is not just, they say, that a minority should rule over a majority, regardless of the relative competence or incompetence of the respective groups to run a country. "Majority rule" has been elevated by left-wing propaganda to the status of a sacred religious fetish, to which even such an eminent Christian divine as the Archbishop of Canterbury bows down.

If these ardent worshippers of "majority rule" were asked whether it should apply to a kindergarten school, where the teachers are outnumbered by the pupils, they would presumably say No. Yet these same left-wingers are at this moment trying to coerce the white minority of Rhodesia to hand over control of that highly developed country to people whose intellectual equals have shown what a mess they could speedily make of the Congo.

When driven to abandon their defence of the untenable theory of "majority rule" the apologists fall back upon their final ditch. They claim that, even if the undeveloped peoples may make a mess of governing their country, it is, after all their own country and they want to be "free". In most cases this alleged longing for "freedom" is a figment of left-wing imagination, if indeed it is not a deliberate lie.

Our politicians must have known, unless they are imbeciles, that the ordinary masses of Asia or Africa are *not* interested in self-government. Montague and Chelmsford knew this about India forty years ago. British politicians of today have no excuse for imagining that popular feeling in undeveloped lands has changed in this respect.

During the thirteen years of shame, when a Tory government was organizing the break-up of the Empire, official instructions were

issued to district commissioners, and similar officials in charge of colonial territories, that they were to tour their districts and give instruction to the people about the independence which would shortly be given to their country. In Nigeria, when a young white administrator delivered an educational talk of this kind, in accordance with orders received, his words were heard by the simple countrymen with horror and dismay. They protested loudly that they had no wish for this promised freedom. They besought him, as representative of British rule, not to leave them. Much the same experience was encountered all over the Empire when young men in charge of districts, in accordance with orders received from an exalted source, tried to reconcile their flock to the prospect of being left without British rule.

However complacently Whitehall politicians may live in the clouds, it is incredible to think that no mention at all of the real reactions of the colonial peoples should have come to the knowledge of Whitehall. Yet they persisted in forcing severance from the British upon unwilling recipients of this boon.

Besides multi-racial India there were in the Empire smaller territories with multi-racial communities. Fiji was one of them with its original Fijian population vastly outnumbered by Indian immigrants. Mauritius was another. Here again a huge influx of Indian immigration had swamped the Creole French (Mauriciens) whose homeland the island had been for generations. In British Guiana there was similar tension between Indian immigrants and the descendants of African slaves, to say nothing of a third racial group, the original Amerindians. In Cyprus the Turkish minority dreaded the Greek domination, which independence would bring. In all these cases there was strong opposition from an important part of the colony against termination of British rule.

And yet, knowing all this, and knowing the lack of any real desire for independence among the undeveloped peoples, British politicians obstinately persisted in forcing independence upon one unwilling community after another. We may well ask why.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that, in their otherwise unaccountable conduct, the Tory government of 1951-1964 must have been acting under outside pressure of some sort. This suspicion is greatly strengthened if we study the sequence of the early surrenders of British interests.

The first incident was that of Abadan—not of course a part of the British Empire but most certainly a vital British interest created out of almost nothing by sheer British enterprise. The Abadan crisis had already commenced during Mr. Attlee's government, but the situation was still in hand, and could have been saved, when the Tories assumed power. H.M.S. *Mauritius* was in the Persian Gulf,

within easy reach of Abadan, and a brigade from India lay in readiness at Basra. Public opinion in Persia and Iraq fully expected firm action by the British to follow this show of force. But, at the last moment, the British climbed down *in response to American pressure*. The situation drifted from bad to worse until eventually, after prolonged negotiations, *conducted by the Americans*, an international consortium took over what had been an exclusively British enterprise, and kindly allowed the British to keep 40 per cent of what had recently been wholly theirs. *Americans* took another 40 per cent and acquired a controlling interest in the refineries.

A few years later this blow to British prestige was followed by an even more serious one—the Suez affair. Again it was pressure from outside that influenced Sir Anthony Eden (later Lord Avon), the British Premier, into calling off the Suez operation in a humiliating way when on the brink of success. It was *America* again that played a leading part in this anti-British action.

There is little doubt that the Tory politicians of 1951-64 were acting under foreign influence of a very compelling nature during their liquidation of the British Empire, and there is little doubt that this influence was American. Did this conduct of British affairs by British politicians, acting under foreign influence, constitute a betrayal of the trust imposed on them by their Sovereign and by the British electorate? History will one day judge them. Meanwhile it can scarcely be denied that it would have been considerably more honourable for the Tory leadership in 1951, assuming that they were indeed under intolerable foreign pressure, to have taken the British electorate into their confidence and told the British nation openly that we were being compelled by American pressure to liquidate the British Empire.

That, almost certainly, would have been the course taken by Sir Winston Churchill, if he had still held the reins with his old-time vigour. In 1940, when things were as black for Great Britain as they have ever been, he spoke out openly to the people, concealing nothing. We had our backs to the wall then and he told us so in no uncertain terms—"blood, sweat, and tears". The British people responded to such candour and resisted all that the enemy could do. They would no doubt have done the same in 1951 if the Conservative Party had told them candidly that another enemy of our country—recently (and still nominally) our ally—was forcing Great Britain into paths disastrous to our British future.

But the British public were never told the truth. No mention of a coming liquidation of the Empire figured in the election manifesto of the Tory Party. No hint was given that, in the next few years, under a Conservative government, our country was going to open its gates to a torrent of coloured immigration which, as any

child could foretell, would inevitably change the national character of the very people who had built the Empire, thus doing their best to ensure that Great Britain could never rise again. The voters were never told that our country had its back to the wall, just as desperately as in 1940, though our enemy of 1951 still posed as a friend. Instead the electorate was lulled by the fatuous parrot-cry that our country had "never had it so good".

When a few patriots, alarmed at such portents as the smooth substitution of the word Commonwealth for Empire and then the quiet omission of the prefix British, began to ask questions, they were pacified with another parrot-cry. "The Empire is not breaking up but simply growing up", they were told. It is at this point that all of us, who ought to have known better, must begin to shoulder a share of the blame. We ought not to have been deceived.

Abadan should have made the danger clear. Suez should have roused the patriotic portion of the electorate to immediate action. Churchill's remark to Roosevelt concerning liquidation of the Empire, already fairly widely known to the thinking public, should have left Britons in no doubt as to America's intentions toward the Empire, and the fact that their plot existed as far back as Yalta.

It is true that a minority of enlightened patriots did their utmost to sound the alarm—notably the League of Empire Loyalists. But already nearly all the machinery for public instruction had passed under control of Great Britain's secret enemies. A campaign of derisory vilification was launched against the few who were alert to the danger, and who dared to try to rouse the mass of complacently orthodox Conservatives. In the minds of many fox-hunting, bridge-playing, county families (good fellows all of them and life-long Tories) any criticism of the party leadership seeemed nearly as bad as blasphemy. To raise funds for the Party by whist-drives and the like, to canvass the countryside at election time, and to keep the Socialists out—these were all that should be expected of Conservative supporters.

As to questioning the reasons for giving away the Empire or the wisdom of mongrelizing the British nation, "theirs not to reason why". It simply was not done.

Admittedly it required courage in those days even to hint that our great ally America seemed to be playing rather an anti-British game. It was hard enough for decent Englishmen even to allow such a horrible thought to creep into their own inmost consciences. This difficulty still persists, and is due to mental confusion on what exactly is meant by America.

Many of us during the war were personally fortunate in the Americans alongside whom we fought and with whom we formed cordial friendships. It is impossible to believe that such good fellows

as those could stoop to treacherous conduct against their wartime allies. This, of course, is quite true. There are probably over 95 per cent of good, decent, honest Americans, whose friendship and admiration for Great Britain is genuine and lasting. But America is an enormous nation and there are different kinds of Americans. Furthermore, as in other modern democracies, what the powers-that-be do frequently differs widely from what decent citizens would like them to do.

A very large number of American books have been published (such as *None Dare Call It Treason* by John A. Stormer) to warn the American nation itself, with fully documented proofs, of the extent to which the United States Government has been infiltrated by Communist and other sinister influences. There is almost as much disquiet among patriotic Americans concerning the un-American conduct of their own government as there is among patriotic Britons concerning the anti-British behaviour of the State Department, Washington.

Therefore, to recognize the painful truth and to declare that the United States Government is being manipulated by secret enemies of Great Britain, is in no sense a reflection upon decent Americans. Actually there is no cause for surprise that anti-British feeling exists in America. Unfortunately it dates right back to the War of Independence. It manifested itself in the unsuccessful American attempt to seize Canada in 1814, when Great Britain had her hands full with the Napoleonic War.

This lingering antipathy toward the former mother-country was intensified during the nineteenth century by the influx of Irishmen who left their own country because of the troubles with England. This flame of anti-British sentiment continued to be carried across the Atlantic by fresh Irish migrants, even up to very recent times.

But the true source of anti-British thought lies deeper in the American community. One cannot read such books as *None Dare Call It Treason* with its documented accusations against prominent American statesmen and officials—people whose names have won respect in Great Britain—without feeling that men of this calibre simply could not have been traitors or villains of their own accord. One forms an unescapable impression that these important and prominent men can have been nothing more than political puppets, whose movements and deeds have been controlled by hidden wire-pullers behind the scenes.

America is a land of immense wealth. A predominant share of this wealth rests in the hands of a comparatively small number of men. On this exalted level finance becomes international—or rather it has always been so. New York happens today to be the home of international finance on the grand scale. The big men who manipu-

late it may indeed live in America and call themselves Americans. But their outlook, their ambitions, and their plans are international. It almost automatically happens that this immensely powerful community, living as it does in America, uses the weapon close to its hand, i.e., the American nation, to carry out that powerful community's plans for the future of mankind. These plans necessitated for a start the downfall of the British people and the destruction of their Empire.

There is no secret about the influence exercised by international finance. Its manipulators are so sure of themselves that they boast openly of their power. The late Mr. Bernard Baruch, for example, at the end of the First World War, announced that he was attending the Peace Conference in London so as to "hold the big stick over the big boys to prevent them from fouling up the peace". By the "big boys" he meant the statesmen of the victorious allies—men with authority to speak for their own countries. By the "big stick" he meant the power of money, since he owned no other authority. Mr. Baruch had never been elected to represent any country or any party. He just represented international finance.

This then was the background to the betrayal of the British Empire. At the bidding of wire-pullers in America our ally pursued a policy consistently anti-British from the moment that the war ended, if indeed they waited as long as that. American influence, backed no doubt by international finance, projected itself upon British politicians, starting upon those of the left but quickly extending its grip to those of the right also. The craze for destroying colonialism—always a pet subject with Americans if the colonies belonged to someone else—was adopted as a serious policy for the reconstruction of the whole world. Backed by international finance, American statesmen bulldozed statesmen of other nations into acceptance of their views. Not only the British Empire but those of the French, the Dutch and the Belgians also were destroyed by an American mixture of financial pressure, aid to rebel movements, bribery of indigenous big-wigs and—above all—pressure of some mysterious but highly effective kind upon the statesmen of the British, French, Dutch, or Belgian Governments.

Synchronized with this political attack, American pornographic literature, American films, American comedians, and American lecturers assiduously undermined the moral standards of the British people. British outlooks on religion, purpose of life, duty, marriage and divorce, sexual moderation, commercial honesty, and even sport, were all ridiculed as "square" or old-fashioned.

Publication of books or articles, supporting robust outlooks on British history, or on the rights and wrongs of colonialism, were squeezed out of print by financial pressure on newspapers and

publishing houses. Such British history as was taught in British schools tended toward glorification of America and slurs against the British historical record. In 1957 a boy at one of England's best preparatory schools disclosed that the *only* British battle that he remembered hearing about at school was the Battle of New Orleans, rather an obscure sideshow of the Anglo-American war of 1814, in which particular action a British force was defeated. The fact that the United States failed in its main war aim, the annexation of Canada, had not been deemed worthy of mention, any more than the fact that the British had captured and burned the city of Washington.

In short the undermining of British national pride, sense of historic values, spiritual and moral stamina, and all other ingredients of national greatness, has been stealthily carried out for many years as a well-planned operation of psychological war. At the same time emissaries of the American C.I.A. or of the State Department, Washington, have travelled about the world putting spokes in the works of British colonial administration. The egregious Mr. Mennen Williams, an offensive trouble-maker in Africa, was outstanding among many others.

All this was the work of an anti-British organization, working through a foreign power, and was therefore morally justifiable as an operation of power politics, though it is a trifle unusual perhaps for one nation to treat another in this way while still posing as an ally. However, by modern standards of international morality neither Americans nor the wire-pullers behind them can be blamed for their anti-British activities. By those standards it was legitimate, and it was very efficiently done. We can but give them admiration for their skill.

The indignation of British patriots should be reserved, not for foreign enemies of our country, who have only behaved as enemies normally do, but for British right-wing politicians, who must have seen all this going on, who for thirteen years had the power and responsibility of defending our country against such attacks, but who made no attempt to stop it, if indeed some of them did not actually aid and abet this enemy action. One more example I give.

The flooding of Great Britain with coloured immigrants started in the form of financially assisted passages for West Indians, the fares being paid by foreign money-lenders. It quickly became clear to Britons of ordinary intelligence, who had studied the results of multi-racialism in other lands, that this new development, if unchecked, would eventually destroy the whole character of the British nation. Yet leaders of the Conservative Party, far from acting against this danger while it was still easily controllable, actively encouraged the invasion and to this day persist in minimizing the danger,

advocating integration, and smearing as racialists or extremists those patriots who dare to protest.

If the Conservative Party leadership has not been guilty of a deliberate betrayal of the trust placed upon them by their Queen and by their electoral supporters during their thirteen years in office, at least they cannot be acquitted of a gross dereliction of duty.

It is beside the point to mention that the other parties, being further to the left, might well have done far worse damage to our British future. It is in the nature of left-wingers to do so.

By infiltration of the Conservative Party with the defeatist ideas of the left, by invasion of the Party leadership and the Conservative Central Office by men of left-wing mentality, posing as Tories, the task of restoring Great Britain to health and vigour has been rendered immeasurably more difficult. No political party today believes in Great Britain's destiny or cares whether she degenerates to the status of a third-class nation—not *one* of the three big parties. The Tories, traditional defenders of the nation and Empire, have abandoned their post. It is left to a few old-fashioned patriots, without funds, without aid from the Press or the B.B.C. (if not indeed against opposition from these agencies) to save the situation.

The Conservative leaders of 1951-1964 will have a serious charge to answer at the bar of history.

10

POST-MORTEM ON AN EMPIRE

It is, of course, unusual to hold a post-mortem before the corpse is quite dead. Some readers may consider this chapter a trifle premature, because suddenly, after a long period of apparent death, the heart of the Empire has given a convulsive flutter. The British Government and the Parliament in Westminster have started acting once more (November, 1965) as an imperial power after putting up meekly with insults, rebellion, and many a unilateral declaration of independence from self-appointed leaders of people all over the world. To enlightened progressives, such as the leaders of all three of Great Britain's major political parties, the provocation now facing them has proved more than they can bear.

For this time the culprit is no mere undeveloped Afro-Asian community, demanding the full privileges of independence within the Commonwealth (including the right to dictate Great Britain's own policies and conduct) without, of course, shouldering any of the burden. This time imperial bumbledom is being defied by a highly civilized community of white settlers and educated Africans, who together have fashioned the prosperous land of Rhodesia out of what was, only eighty years ago, one of the darkest parts of barbarous Africa. These Rhodesians, white and black, have no desire to boss the old country, as Dr. N'Krumah and others like him are trying to do. These Rhodesians, white and black, simply wish to continue the process of civilizing Rhodesia in that way which they, with local knowledge of their less enlightened people, know to be the best. For, although a small proportion of Rhodesian Africans are enlightened and educated men, and are sharing in the running of Rhodesia, the country also contains large numbers of other Africans, who still have a long way to travel on the educational path, before they also will be qualified to wield an equal amount of power.

This naturally clashes with the doctrinaire ideas of every left-wing intellectual, which means, in effect, with every British politician of any note. The cry of the moment for all such people is "majority rule" (and damn the consequences). It matters nothing to them that majority rule has brought chaos and horror in the Congo and in most of the other recently emancipated African lands.

It matters nothing that the prospect of majority rule is viewed with alarm and despondency in multi-racial countries of the Commonwealth, such as Mauritius, Fiji, and British Guiana. This magic expression "majority rule" has become a sacred fetish among self-styled progressives of all established parties. To doubt its universal suitability savours almost of political blasphemy. Nor do its ardent worshippers even pause to consider it odd that Dr. N'Krumah, leader of the African pack that is clamouring for the white Rhodesians' blood, was himself (till recently) the one-man ruler of Ghana, where majority rule has been conspicuous for its absence.

At long last, when nearly all our other colonies have gone, the British lion has uttered one of the famous roars which the world never expected to hear again. Here at last is a colony that can be roared-at in the good old-fashioned way without offending the Afro-Asians, or the Americans, or that mysterious wire-pulling organization, known as world opinion. It matters little to Whitehall politicians that Rhodesia is a colony only in name, having been self-governing, and remarkably efficiently so, for many years. It matters not at all that Rhodesia would have had her independence within the Commonwealth many years ago had her rulers not agreed to defer this for the wider benefit of the brief-lived Federation of Central Africa.

Nothing else matters to these timid men—Labour, Conservative, and Liberal politicians alike—except the fact that, in order to appease the Afro-Asians, the American State Department, and that mysterious world opinion, they must swallow their common sense, forget solemn British promises to Rhodesia and try to bully a community, second to none in its loyalty to the Queen and Commonwealth, into a disastrous surrender to the idol called "majority rule".

But this show of spirit in the dying heart of a dying Empire does not mean that there is really any life left. It is like the convulsive twitchings of a chicken after it has been beheaded. It is unfortunately not premature at all to proceed with the post-mortem.

Nothing in human evolution is immune from change, and it would have been unreasonable to expect the British Empire to exist for ever in its Victorian form. At one time there was, however, a reasonable hope that it would survive and continue its civilizing influence in a modernized form for many hundred years. There were two alternative forms which the twentieth-century Empire might have taken.

(a) Without loss of territory or people. It was at one time possible to visualize a multi-racial federation of self-governing kingdoms, each acknowledging the British Monarch as the Sovereign of each individual kingdom. Foreign affairs, defence, and trade arrangements of general interest to the whole Empire, would have been controlled

by a central imperial council, while all other matters would have been left in the hands of individual national governments. Within each kingdom the indigenous race would have retained predominance while British subjects of other races would have accepted the status of guests without any stigma of colour or creed on the part of the local government or the guest. To those who doubt the possibility of this, attention is drawn to the progress already achieved in this direction in the India of 1937.

The Governor of the Punjab then was Sir Sikandar Hayat, member of a distinguished Punjabi family. British officers and civil servants experienced not the slightest difficulty in accepting him as their superior, by virtue of his appointment as representative of the King-Emperor. If evolution had been allowed to continue in this sane and broadminded manner, the next steps would have been Indian governors in all the provinces, an Indian Viceroy and an elected Indian Government with full powers, subject only to federation of defence, foreign affairs, etc.—a reservation to which Great Britain herself and all the older dominions would have been equally subject. There was only one obstacle to this course of events—namely the racialism rooted in the minds of a comparatively few of the western-educated Indian intelligentsia.

(b) As a smaller but more homogeneous federated Empire. If the narrow racialism of the few in the non-white countries of the Empire was doomed to prevail over the broader loyalty of the masses to a great empire (an extremely doubtful outcome, had not the racialist minorities been backed by outside disruptive forces) then a second alternative lay before the British Empire. It could have shed all its non-white peoples and territories and transformed itself into a closely knit federation of the *white* nations of the Empire on similar lines to those outlined above—namely centralization of defence, foreign affairs, and internal trade (within the white Empire) coupled with complete devolution of all residuary affairs to the individual national governments.

In the light of what we now know of disruptive anti-British influences, working from without for the disintegration of the Empire, it may well be that the first alternative, the ideal of a multi-racial monarchy encircling the earth, could never have produced permanency and stability. But there is no reason to doubt that the second alternative, the ideal of a federated white monarchy, comprising the United Kingdom plus the overseas white nations of the Commonwealth, was a practicable proposition.

No valid objection can be sustained against it. Distance between the component parts would have presented no insuperable difficulty, even in the era before flying. For in those days Britannia effectively ruled the waves. The ocean routes between Great Britain and Canada,

Great Britain and South Africa, South Africa and Australia, Australia and New Zealand, as well as the shorter sea route from Great Britain to Australia through the Suez Canal—all these were strategically secure arteries of the great white empire that could have been formed. Transit from one extremity to the other might at first perhaps have been slow, but so was transit in the early days from New York to San Francisco or from the Baltic to Vladivostock. This did not prevent either of these continental land masses from becoming one compact political entity.

At a later period, when long-distance air travel brought London within a few hours journey of Sydney and all the other capitals, the apparently scattered Imperial Federation would, in effect, have been more closely knit, in terms of travel hours, than many an apparently small country whose internal communications may happen to be bad or difficult.

There were, of course, other problems, but none of these were insuperable. There would have been the problem of non-white populations in some of the countries wishing to join the Imperial Federation. There would also have been the problem of two white races, with different languages and cultures, inhabiting one country, as in the cases of Canada or South Africa. Or the similar problem of religious strains within one country, as in the case of Ireland. All these problems will be studied fully later, when we investigate the great question—"Is it too late, even now, to form this Federated Empire out of the white hard core of the Victorian Empire?"

For none of these problems caused earlier dreams of this kind to fail. It was not any geographical or ethnological difficulty that wrecked past attempts at Imperial Federation. Early attempts failed through lack of vision and courage on the part of British statesmen. The nearest approach to a successful launching of this idea came in 1922-23 in the form of Imperial Preference—a boldly imaginative scheme for a closer union of the white nations by means of trading facilities, more favourable than those applied to countries outside the Empire. Admittedly the idea of Imperial Preference was to have been applied to the entire Empire and not only to the white nations, but its effect would have been a fusion of the white nations into one economic and strategic entity. An eventual breakaway from the Empire of the non-white nations may or may not have been inevitable. It is a matter of two opinions, neither of which can be proved or disproved today.

The essential point is that it was still possible, not so many years ago, to have welded the white nations into one great British nation, whose solidarity would have been just as real today as those of America or the Soviet Union.

The opportunity was lost and the dream faded because British

politicians lacked the courage and vision of great men. They let themselves be frightened by American growls. They let themselves be sidetracked into party political squabbles concerning Free Trade or Protection. The protection which they argued about was merely a term of political jargon for an economic alternative. The protection that loyal subjects of the British Crown all round the world really wanted was the protection of *belonging to one great nation*, strategically capable of protecting even the most outlying parts and guarding the sea routes between them all. The wider strategic concept was drowned in petty squabbles about the lesser and narrower concept of economic amenities.

From the moment when the idea of Imperial Preference faded the dream of one federated British nation faded also. The more distant white dominions began to seek ways of looking after themselves, feeling that the mother country had lost interest in them. As British interest waned, or appeared to wane, American influence seeped in, particularly in Canada. Though sentimental affection for the old country may not have diminshed in many overseas homes, a tendency arose for Canada, Australia, and New Zealand to feel that each was now a separate nation, left to its own resources in defence, in trade, and in its relations with countries outside the Empire. This drifting apart of the overseas dominions was formalized by the Statute of Westminster of 1931.

Henceforward the old Dominions were officially recognized as fully independent nations, linked to one another and to the United Kingdom only by allegiance to the same Monarch and by occasional but very tenuous conferences. The immigration of non-British peoples—Ukrainians, Czechs, Dukhobor Russians, and others into Canada—and Italians, Spaniards, and other Mediterranean peoples into Queensland produced new generations of Canadians or Australians who were not united by ancestral links to Great Britain.

Enough has been said to show that the late British Empire did not die simply of old age or from any other natural causes. It was deliberately killed. The verdict must be "Murder by some persons *well known*". Those primarily responsible were foreign enemies of the British Empire. Here we need waste no time in specifying these enemies or assessing their relative shares in the murder. Were Afro-Asian demagogues foremost in plotting imperial downfall? Or were international financiers the real villains? Was the State Department, Washington, in its many underhand blows against British interests, operating on behalf of the American people or was that department working for some mysterious group of wire-pullers who have been using the American Government and all its resources merely as a tool in some vast scheme for world domination?

Some think one thing and some another. It really matters not

at all to us, as students of British weaknesses and strength, which of these foreign policy-makers played the leading anti-British part. For, after all, they are all foreigners. There was no moral obligation on them to favour British interests, nor any moral stigma in striking blows against the British Empire. Every powerful organization has enemies. We ought to have expected all sorts of trouble from foreign enemies and guarded ourselves against it. If, by the grace of God, Great Britain rises to true greatness again, we must always expect similar blows and plots from foreign enemies. Such things are an inevitable part of the jostle of human communities. But anti-British acts by *people of our own nation* are unnatural, horrible, and quite incompatible with greatness in a nation. Without this poison within our system our foreign enemies could have achieved little or nothing. This decomposition must be rooted out before Great Britain can be restored to health. For, though the Empire in its former pattern is dead beyond recall, the British nation is very far from dead.

II

POWER-POLITICS IN THE NUCLEAR AGE

THE advent of nuclear weapons has frightened many people, who previously would not have bothered themselves about foreign affairs, into taking at least a superficial interest in that sphere of human relations. Like most superficial studies by ill-informed people, this has led to unbalanced and sometimes almost hysterical conclusions. There is a tendency to believe that nothing in the realm of international affairs can ever be the same again.

This is a dangerous fallacy. Over twenty years have passed since Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but international relations are still a jungle wherein the strong do very much as they wish and weak nations go to the wall. Admittedly on the surface there is a veneer of respect for the United Nations Organization, but it means very little. The United Nations did not save Hungary from Russian tanks in 1956. It condoned Nasser's theft of the Suez Canal and condemned Great Britain and France for taking steps to rectify that illegality. It has closed its eyes to a completely illegal blockade of the canal by Egypt against Israeli shipping. Nasser has now threatened to apply this blockade to ships of any country, if they carry goods to or from Rhodesia. Such closure of the canal is directly contrary to every agreement, regulating the canal administration. But the United Nations blandly ignored the offence.

The United Nations has done absolutely nothing, beyond penning plaintive protests to India, to bring about a just and impartial settlement of the Kashmir problem. Nor did the United Nations save Goa from military invasion by India—an act just as aggressive as Hitler's seizure of Czechoslovakia. West Irian (the former Dutch New Guinea) is inhabited by people entirely different from those of Indonesia by race, language, and culture. When Sukarno claimed this territory, and threatened to take it by force, both the Dutch and the local inhabitants protested to the United Nations. They protested in vain. Once again the aggressor, backed for some mysterious reason by powerful outside interests, got his way and the weaker party (or rather the party *not* backed by those powerful outside interests) went to the wall.

Power-politics have not ceased as a result of the nuclear age. They have simply moved with the times and brought the technique

up to date. Below the surface armed strength, and not the justice of any international dispute, decides the issue exactly as it has always done.

To show how power-politics operate in this nuclear age let us take the example, quoted above, of Indonesia. This backward and almost bankrupt country cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be called a great power. Yet not once but many times she has perpetrated acts of aggression with impunity, even against such a power as Great Britain, who still possesses adequate means of hitting back.

At the present time (1965) she is conducting what is fatuously called a "confrontation" (double-talk jargon for an undeclared war) against Malaysia, an ally of Great Britain and a member of the Commonwealth. Now if this were an open war, with no holds barred, Great Britain could deploy, even in these degenerate days, sufficient naval and aerial power to bring Indonesia to her knees in a week or two. The war would not, as now, be limited to fighting with one hand tied behind the British back, fending off small parties of infiltrators from the extensive coasts of Malaysia or hunting them out of dense jungle. The war would, in accordance with correct strategic principles, be carried into the enemy's own country. Why is this not done?

Again, when Malaysia was first formed by the union of the Malay State with Sarawak, Brunei, and North Borneo, a mob, incited of course by government propaganda, looted and burned the British Embassy in Jakarta. It was reported that Indonesian police stood by without lifting a finger to protect British property, if indeed they did not actively encourage the looters. It was, in fact, as blatant an example of high-handed action, backed and approved by Sukarno's government, as could well have happened.

In the days of gunboat diplomacy the Royal Navy would have sent a ship into Jakarta harbour and would have obtained satisfaction at the muzzle of a gun. It is fashionable today to laugh at gunboat diplomacy but at least it got things done, which is more than the United Nations Organization does in such cases. It at least used to discourage bumptious rulers of semi-civilized states from flaunting their contempt for international decencies, which again is something that U.N.O. fails to achieve.

In the case of the Jakarta outrage it was abundantly clear that President Sukarno himself must either have instructed his police not to perform their normal duty of keeping order or else he must have approved of the action of some subordinate (e.g., the Chief of Police) in giving instructions to that effect. It would therefore have been eminently fair and just if the British Government had demanded a personal apology from the President, coupled with financial restitution of the damage, or instant dismissal of the guilty subordinate. In

default of immediate compliance it would have been simple, tactically easy, and in every way morally justifiable to punish the President by sending a fighter-bomber to put a rocket through one of the windows of his palace, after due warning to evacuate all personnel from that part of the palace.

"Unthinkable! Outrageous!" will be the mental reaction of many on reading this suggestion. But why? Such retribution would have been richly deserved. It would have been effective, in that it would dissuade the culprit, and others like him, from twisting the lion's tail any more. Furthermore it would not have endangered human life if the palace occupants had the sense to evacuate when warned. It would, in fact, be gunboat diplomacy in a modern, humanitarian, but very effective form.

As international affairs stand at the moment this cannot be done because of a mental disease called nuclear neurosis which afflicts millions of people in Great Britain. In the jargon of the day, they fear that stern action of this kind, no matter how richly it may be deserved, might "escalate" into a nuclear war.

We, in fact, hold our hand when the lion's tail is twisted by a bumptious Oriental dictator, but *not* on account of his own fighting power. We put up with his bad conduct because he has at his back some nation wielding nuclear power. Sometimes there is more than one of these powers encouraging upstarts to twist the British lion's tail.

The background to the Suez crisis of 1956 is sufficiently well known by now. Not only the Soviet Union but our supposedly friendly ally, America, bombarded the unfortunate Sir Anthony Eden with threats. The American Mediterranean Fleet even tried to block the path of the Franco-British combined forces on their way to Port Said. This plan only failed because the Americans had underestimated the determination of British naval officers. However the war of words continued, and in the end it browbeat the British and French Governments into surrender, because the ultimate threat of nuclear action was held over their heads.

Power-politics during the first decade of this century mainly concerned the six great powers of Europe—namely Great Britain, France, and Russia on the one hand and Germany, Austria, and Italy on the other. The first three had grouped themselves into the Triple Entente while the last three were known as the Triple Alliance, Italy being by no means an enthusiastic partner. Together the six were sometimes called the Concert of Europe—rather satirically perhaps, for their music often lacked harmony. Be that as it may, their function, and for many years their very real value to humanity, lay in their ability to sing sufficiently together to avoid a general war over the many crises which sprang up among them.

America, the seventh great power, at that time kept aloof from the delicately balanced affairs of Europe. She contented herself with complete supremacy throughout the two American continents (in accordance with her traditional Monroe Doctrine) and with spreading her sphere of influence over the Pacific Ocean. Within that vast region she pursued an imperialistic policy, not only acquisitive but unscrupulous. In 1898, for example, she picked a quarrel with Spain over the alleged sabotage of the American battleship *Maine*, which had visited Cuban waters to protect American citizens during one of Cuba's many rebellions. The *Maine* was sunk in Havana harbour by a mysterious internal explosion, and the fiery slogan "Remember the Maine" was fully exploited by President "Teddy" Roosevelt and by the Hearst Press to rouse the American people to a pitch of war-fury, in much the same way that Pearl Harbour served later. But there was this difference. Some years afterwards, when the Spanish-American War had transferred Spain's colonies, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Phillipine Islands into American custody, the battleship *Maine* was salvaged and the discovery was made that, whatever may have caused the fatal explosion, *it could not have been due to Spanish action*. Now, with the rise of the Castro régime in Cuba, the old war-cry "Remember the Maine" may echo rather wryly in American hearts as the symbol of an essay in imperialism that has since gone wrong.

Over much of the rest of the world, thanks to Great Britain's two-power naval standard, the *Pax Britannica* continued without serious challenge. The whole world, in fact, was kept at peace by a balance of power among more than half a dozen big nations.

There was one other power forging rapidly ahead into the select club. Japan had astounded the world by her rapid advance from mediaeval isolation. Her victory over Russia in the Far East had unquestionably qualified her for membership of the Great Power Club. At first, however, her distance from Europe made her no cause for anxiety except perhaps to Russia and America.

Such were power-politics before the great cataclysm of 1914. Each of the eight great powers had certain spheres of influence in which that great power could use military force, in reason, without serious risk of interference by any one of the other seven.

Within this general framework minor powers in those days also enjoyed a complete and genuine independence. Each had its own army for maintenance of internal order and for resistance against invasion. Many of them also had their own small navies for the policing of their own territorial waters. A few had the additional strategic commitment of protecting or pacifying small spheres of influence or colonies of their own.

It is the advent of nuclear armaments and nothing else that has

effaced so much of this pre-1914 picture. Nuclear armament and all the electronic and other appendages are expensive beyond all comparison with the conventional weapons of sea, land, or air that sufficed before. Quite small and poor nations used to be able to afford small but well equipped armies, navies, and even air forces, which were adequate for that nation's safety and for her status as an independent country. But now there are very few countries in the world that can afford nuclear armaments *on the scale which is currently deemed necessary by the orthodox strategists of today.* This is the crux of the whole matter.

Up to 1914 the world contained eight great powers including one new candidate entering the club. Let us first see what has become of those eight today, and consider whether any new candidates exist. Of the six European powers of 1914, Austria-Hungary has disintegrated. Italy, after a brief spell of glorious swagger under Mussolini, has relapsed into a respectable bourgeois state without external ambitions. Germany, temporarily split into two, no longer strides the world like a colussus. Great Britain and France, bled nearly to death by their efforts in two wars and subsequently euchred out of their colonial empires, cannot for the moment claim the global stature which was theirs before 1914.

Russia alone among the European Concert of former days still stands out as a very great world power. She is only challenged in this by the United States. Japan, the young stripling of 1905 has, after a flash of Far Eastern dominance, been relegated to the status of a virtual satellite of America.

At the present moment—and it is important to stress the transient nature of this statement—there are only two really great powers in the world, America and the Soviet Union, for only they can afford the gigantic expenses of a nuclear arms race.

Their latest tendency to carry the arms race into space will plunge their defence budgets far into the realms of lunacy. The present costs of sub-spacial weapon stock-piling will seem but a flea-bite in comparison with the mounting costs of super-spacial war preparation. It is doubtful whether these two rivals will be able to maintain this pace for long. It is certain that no third power can afford to join them in this lunacy.

At first glance this may appear to mean that no country other than these two space-age giants can be truly independent, since no other can afford to participate in their mad space-age rivalry. In reality it means nothing of the kind. It is not even true to say that no nation can be truly independent unless it can afford to pile up an immense stock of nuclear warheads together with long range rockets to carry them. All that any nation requires, in order to be immune from nuclear blackmail by either of the two massively

nuclear powers, is a sure means of striking back at an aggressor in a way that the aggressor's own people would find intolerable.

Let us suppose that some small country, "Ruritania", is threatened today with nuclear destruction of its cities if it does not follow a policy dictated by (say) the Soviet Union. That small country might be safe in defying the threat, *provided* that the other big nuclear power (America) openly supported the threatened little country. But, supposing that one day the two nuclear giants make a secret pact to co-operate in the smashing of "Ruritania", then that little country would have to submit unless she herself possessed the power to destroy one big city in the lands of her aggressors. The knowledge that this reprisal could be and would be inflicted would be enough to dissuade the aggressor (one or both) from actually using his nuclear threat.

There is a dangerous amount of muddled thinking today about power-politics in the nuclear age. It is essential to get the salient facts very firmly fixed in one's mind. These are:

(1) It is generally agreed that any full scale nuclear war, employing all the stock-piles of nuclear weapons accumulated on each side, would inevitably obliterate civilization and would leave even the victorious belligerents destitute. Consequently nobody but a raving lunatic will ever initiate a full-scale nuclear war. What then is the use of stock-piling nuclear arms?

(2) Nuclear arms, though useless as a sane means of making war, are invaluable to a large and aggressive power for bullying smaller nations into subservience. They are also *essential* as a deterrent against this form of nuclear blackmail. The bullying threatener of nuclear doom must be confronted with the *certainty* that retribution will follow aggression and in sufficient force to make aggression not worth while. Now, if nuclear power is in the hands of two great nations (as at present) then small nations can enjoy a modicum of indirect protection from nuclear blackmail from the hope that the two giants will deter one another.

But there is always a danger that two giants may co-operate, as in the case of Poland (1939) and the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact. The sad fairy story of the *Babes in the Wood* is regrettably true to diplomatic reality today. Incidentally, if ever the whole world lies under the control of one government, with a monopoly over all nuclear armament, then it will indeed be the end of human freedom because every nation, great or small, and every human community will be completely subject to the irresistible and undeterable threat of nuclear punishment for disobedience of World Government orders, no matter how unjust or tyrannous these might be.

(3) Thus it follows that, if nuclear armament is regarded in its proper light as a deterrent *against* misuse of nuclear power and *not*

(as at present regarded) as if it were a normal weapon of war, then safety and freedom for mankind will lie, *not* in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons among smaller powers but quite the contrary. The more nations there are who possess the means of hitting back effectively, the less chance will the nuclear giants themselves have of bullying smaller powers by means of nuclear blackmail.

Let us apply this notion to the world as it exists today. The two nuclear giants, America and Russia, temporarily act as a sort of mutual brake upon any tendency of one or the other to go too far in the application of nuclear blackmail. But the risk of a diplomatic deal between those two, to rule the whole world as a condominium, is too feasible to be neglected. The smaller nations will never be secure in their national freedom until the number of nuclear-armed powers is increased from the present two up to at least half a dozen. As explained already, it will not be in the least necessary for these newcomers to enter the space-age contest or even to accumulate enough rockets and warheads for a prolonged mutual bombardment. All that they will need will be something to convince any prospective nuclear aggressor that nuclear attack will not be a one-way business.

There are in the world today at least five powers, other than America and the Soviet Union, whose economic resources and industrial potential are quite sufficient to provide that amount of nuclear deterrent. These five are (1) *Great Britain*, with (or even without if necessary) the white nations of the Commonwealth; (2) *France*; (3) *West Germany* (with or without the rest of the Common Market bloc); (4) *Communist China*; and (5) *India* (with or without help from the rest of the Afro-Asians). This makes, with the two existing nuclear giants (America and Russia) a grand total of seven world powers who would qualify strategically as great powers in this nuclear age.

To these may perhaps be added an eighth—South Africa and her neighbours in the southern tip of the continent, if South Africa and Rhodesia do not in due course return to their natural affiliation, the community of white nations of the British bloc.

Given the same standard of British diplomacy which used to enable our country to manipulate a balance of power between the great powers of Europe, it should be possible to maintain a similar balance between the half-dozen or so nuclear powers listed above. Already some of them tend to arrange themselves into opposing camps. Thus we see the United States opposed both to Communist China and, to a slightly lesser extent, to the Soviet Union. We see the Afro-Asian bloc almost rabidly opposed to South Africa and now to Rhodesia. We see a tendency in West Germany toward a

policy of reunion with East Germany and toward a rectification of the Polish frontier—ideas which put them into opposition with the Soviet Union. There is violent tension between Communist China and India. There is a French desire to dominate the Common Market or else to leave it. Thus, among the nuclear powers of the immediate future (to say nothing of tensions between lesser powers) there are at least half a dozen cases of mutual bickering smouldering at this moment. There has never before been such a favourable opportunity for the United Kingdom, closely linked with Her Majesty's other kingdoms overseas, to play the traditional British rôle of holder of the balance of power.

The first essential step will be to disentangle the British bloc of nations from all existing international commitments. We are no longer directly concerned in the quarrel between the dollar imperialism of America and the Communist imperialism whether of Moscow or Peking. To put the matter bluntly, America has been just as harmful to British interests as have either of the great Communist powers. If there ever was a time when the "Western Alliance" made sense, that time is over now. In the interests of Great Britain and the white nations of the Commonwealth we should now adopt a policy of armed neutrality in this particular tension. If the United States and the Soviet Union find that their quarrel is irreconcilable, let them fight it out alone, while we maintain the same detached attitude that America herself adopted during the first two years of each of the World Wars. Again, if the ideological quarrel between Russia and China becomes genuine and irreconcilable, it is no concern of British diplomacy. Let them fight it out between themselves. It will be to the interest of the British nations that those three giants should weaken one another in a three-cornered strife. Our only concern should be that they do not start a global nuclear war and that they cease henceforward to meddle in British affairs. It is to ensure those two conditions that we need a British nuclear deterrent.

The fallacy that nuclear armament is beyond our economic reach, or that it is of no use to us, has had such a long and unchallenged start that it is difficult for public opinion to take a more balanced point of view. Lip service is given all round to the word deterrent, but the world does not really believe that the deterrent will be effective. This view is foolishly pessimistic. Recent history already provides two examples wherein an almost equally horrible weapon—gas—was affected by the presence or absence of a deterrent.

(a) Example of successful deterrence. During the period between the two World Wars the military literature of most civilized countries gave great prominence to essays and articles predicting the decisive and massive use of gas in the coming large-scale war, when-

ever it should break out. Judging from these, and they were generally written by people who had made war-gas their particular study, the reader was almost persuaded to believe that nothing much except gas would count as an effective weapon in future war. It must be admitted that theoretically the gas experts had a strong case. Their position as military prophets was very similar to that of the prophets of nuclear war today. But the simple fact is that *no gas at all* was used by either side throughout the fifty-six months of the Second World War despite the fact that both sides started the war armed with vast stocks of gas and despite the fact that the issues at stake in this struggle were tremendous. In the case of Hitler's Third Reich during the final year of the war the choice was nothing less than unconditional surrender with its inevitable consequences (war trials for the criminals and the utter destruction of Nazism) or else a bold and by no means hopeless bid for victory through a ruthless use of gas on London. To make this example of deterrence even more convincing it must be remembered that Hitler by this time had developed a paranoiac megalomania. He was, in fact, just the type of mad dictator whom the nuclear prophets of doom often hold before our eyes as one who might trigger off a nuclear war.

What then was the factor which the prophets of gas war had omitted from their calculations? It was simply human nature and human common sense. This omission led them to ignore the fact that rulers of aggressive belligerents make war to win and not to call down upon their own countries such reprisals as would make both sides the losers. The only advantage in using a terrible weapon of mass destruction is that you have a weapon which the enemy has not got, and against which he has no protection or redress. The Germans did not gas London, even in the last months when they otherwise faced utter defeat, just because German cities would have suffered in return. The mere fact that they had, in absolute command over them, an unscrupulous madman made no difference at all. For the sane members of Germany's government and of the Wehrmacht would certainly have resisted an order by Hitler to loose gas upon London.

It is foolish to pretend that Germany no longer possessed the power to attack London with gas. For, right up to the last few months V2 missiles were reaching London. A mechanically efficient nation, such as the Germans, would not have found it impossible to fill V2 warheads with gas. No. The only reason why gas was not used in that long and savage war was that its use would have bounced back upon the users. Nuclear bombardment can be and will be deterred in exactly the same way. Now let us examine a grimmer example with a different result.

(b) Example of absence of deterrence. During the Italian war of

conquest against Abyssinia (Ethiopia) gas was used with very decisive results against the primitively armed enemy. If it had not been used, the final result of the war might well have been radically different. For the Abyssinians are tough fighters. They were defending a mountainous and almost roadless country wherein their conventional arms, though light by European standards, were more than adequate for the defeat of Italian soldiers. It is probably fair to state that the use of gas decided the war.

In contrast to Hitler's predicament in the World War the Italians faced no deterrent at all. Their Abyssinian enemies could not answer back. Though world opinion was strongly condemnatory, not a single great power was prepared to go to war with the Italians to protect the Abyssinians against this one-sided use of an irresistible weapon.

These two historically verifiable examples should be kept clearly in mind by all who aspire to study international politics in the shadow of the nuclear bomb. Taken together these examples suggest that possession of an effective deterrent will prevent either side from actually using the weapon. But *first-hand* possession is essential. It is highly dangerous to rely upon some other nation or upon the United Nations, or upon world opinion to protect a weak nation from finding itself unable to protect its own vital interests against a comparatively contemptible aggressor through fear of the disapproval of a powerful nuclear-armed third party.

This happened to Great Britain during the Suez crisis and more recently in her dealings with Indonesia. It is a status of satelliteship intolerable for a country whose influence is still as beneficial to humanity and whose own interests are still as widespread as in the days of the British Empire. We, therefore, like France and several other important countries, must possess our own independent nuclear deterrent—a very different thing to a vast armament of stock-piled nuclear weapons. We could not afford the latter, nor do we need it. We can and must afford the deterrent.

Power-politics in the nuclear age, if left to take its natural course, will therefore entail three categories of independent nations. First there will be the nuclear giants who possess a sufficient nuclear armament to carry on against one another (if foolish enough to do so) a prolonged and massive mutual nuclear bombardment which will terminate in the ruin of both of them and the end of human civilization throughout the world. Second there will arise half a dozen or more lesser nuclear powers, incapable of nuclear folly on that grand scale but quite capable of hitting a nuclear aggressor so hard that he will think twice before initiating any nuclear aggression at all. Third there will be a very large number of states, independent in all other respects except that of being immune from nuclear

blackmail by virtue of their own deterrent power. These will depend for international justice, as minor states have always depended throughout history, upon the braking effect caused by mutual suspicions among the nuclear-armed group of powers.

International peace, or rather the avoidance of a third world war, will depend, just as it depended from 1815 to 1914, upon a balance of power among at least half a dozen (nuclear armed) states, each one of whom, apart from its own selfish interests, will share in common the overmastering desire to avoid a general nuclear conflagration. Unless some dictator arises, even madder than Hitler and with infinitely greater power over his senior subordinates than even Hitler possessed, it is unlikely that a single nuclear bomb will ever be fired in anger.

This certainly does not mean that war will cease altogether any more than it ceased in the world-war-free century 1815-1914. There will be, as now, innumerable confrontations, undeclared minor wars, cold wars, guerilla wars and resistance movements, sponsored and nourished perhaps by outside aid. But these will never escalate into world war simply because the nuclear arm, instead of being, as now, an instrument of nuclear blackmail will have become what it ought to be—its own effective deterrent.

12

THE FUTURE SHAPE OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

THE concept of international peace, outlined above, may seem at first somewhat optimistic to those whose previous thought on this subject has been based upon the opposite (and to my mind fallacious) desideratum of a nuclear monopoly, restricted only to the present possessors of nuclear armaments. Whether optimistic or not, it is, in my submission, just as feasible a policy as the one at present in popular favour, and it certainly offers a more attractive future for the human race.

Let us consider the choice of fates for humanity which alone can emerge from the present policy. There are now only two fully nuclear-armed powers (Russia and America) with a few others very half-heartedly nibbling at the idea of joining the nuclear club. It is the intention of the influential school of thought who advocate stoppage of the spread of nuclear armament, that these other powers (including Great Britain) should abandon all nuclear ambitions, thus leaving Russia and America jointly in possession of supreme power over the whole world. It would be pleasant to hope that these two will balance one another out for ever, but this is extremely unlikely. A far more probable outcome of this expensive rivalry will be either an eventual nuclear war between them—a war in which there could be no neutrals unless sufficiently strongly armed to keep their neutrality by force—or a compact between the two giants to establish a world government. Either of these alternatives would be disastrous for mankind. The former would at least be a quick end, whereas the latter would mean for all mankind perpetual slavery, from which there could be no appeal, and against which resistance would be impossible. It should never be forgotten that power tends to corrupt its wielder and absolute power corrupts its wielder absolutely. World government, whether achieved through a Russo-American compact or through successful efforts of simple-minded idealists to establish a world government could be nothing else but an irresistible tyranny.

The only escape for humanity, and the only hope of prolonged peace (though even this will be subject to local and minor wars), will

be to *multiply* rather than decrease the wielders of the nuclear deterrent. Not until human nature has become so sublime that absolute power can be trusted to dispense absolute justice, not until then will it be safe to entrust all power into the hands of one world government. The United Nations' record so far in the cases of Hungary, Suez, Kashmir, Goa, New Guinea, and the Congo, indicates that humanity has a very long way to travel before that millennium of trust in one Big Brother would be anything but criminal folly.

It is therefore sincerely to be hoped that common sense will prevail, and that international society will shape its future on the lines of a concert of at least half a dozen great powers, each forming the hard core for an alliance of satellites, each of which will defend itself against all forms of conventional aggression, secure from nuclear bullying, thanks to the nuclear umbrella of the protecting power.

Qualifications for becoming one of the greater or nuclear powers will depend materially of course upon a certain degree of national wealth and of industrial development. But, to a far greater extent, these qualifications will depend upon national character. There will have to be a popular willingness to accept some economic self-sacrifice because, although maintenance of a small but adequate *deterrent* will not be out of reach of nations with quite modest economic or industrial potentials, it will be an expensive item in the budget of any nation. Only nations with a will to be genuinely and completely independent will be able to endure the slightly increased austerity of life involved.

Besides this, any nation aspiring to join the nuclear club will have to *deserve* to be considered and accepted as a great power by world opinion as a whole. This can only be achieved by possession of a valid claim to historic greatness, based upon that particular nation's past contribution to civilization outside its own national limits. This past record will have to be coupled with a general feeling among all nations that the candidate for greatness is still today worthy of the respect and trust (though not necessarily the affection) of humanity as a whole. In short the half-dozen or so nuclear powers will have to possess adequate, though by no means enormous, material resources, coupled with the moral qualities that make nations great.

It can hardly be disputed that Great Britain, by virtue of her past record as a civilizer of formerly primitive lands and peoples, has a right, second to none, to remain among the world's great powers. There is little doubt that she could afford the economic and industrial burden of maintaining a nuclear deterrent (in clear distinction to an ability to keep up with the absurd stock-piling race at present in vogue). There is little doubt also that, despite the wild statements

of her detractors, Great Britain still retains the respect of millions of foreigners all over the world, and particularly the respect and trust of those Afro-Asians who remember the days of British rule. The only item of doubt concerns the question whether the people of Great Britain have or have not lost those moral attributes on which alone the true greatness of any nation must depend. This vital question will be considered in a later chapter. For the moment it will be assumed that, even if these qualities have temporarily been lost, they can be recovered by a national awakening, and that Great Britain can and will take and maintain her place among the world's leading powers on an equal footing with any of them.

Let us now take a look at the international structure as it may be in the next few years. Empires, as such, have gone out of fashion and favour—not only the British Empire but those of France, Holland, and the other great civilizing powers also.

This does not mean, however, that the idea of imperialism is also obsolete. On the contrary it flourishes more strongly than ever before, but in another form. Both Russia and the United States are in reality not nations at all but empires.

Modern imperialism implies a multiplicity of nations or races, wherein one nation or race predominates over others. The mere fact that these two gigantic agglomerations of land and people happen to form compact land masses, instead of having their component parts scattered about the world, as with the colonial empires of old, makes no difference at all to the fact that the ingredients of imperialism are present in both these cases. In the United States the white citizens predominate over the black population, to say nothing of other minorities such as redskins, Esquimaux, Puerto Ricans, Hawaiians, and those of Mexican descent. Far beyond the frontiers of American territory the dollar empire exercises, throughout Central and South America, Japan, Korea, Formosa, the Philippines, and many other satellites, an economic, if not indeed a political domination which is more stringent than the former domination of Great Britain over many parts of the British Empire.

Similarly the Soviet Union is composed of sixteen allegedly self-governing republics, wherein live many other races and nations beside the Russians. Out of a total population of over two hundred millions the Russians hardly number half.

Next in numerical importance come the Ukrainians (over forty millions) and then the Kazaks, Kirghiz, Byelorussians, Uzbegs, Armenians, Georgians, Azerbaijanis, Moldavians, Latvians, Estonians, Lithuanians, and others, to say nothing of portions of smaller communities, such as the Chechen-Ingush of the Caucasus, who may have survived as remnants of the genocidal policies of the Russian ruling race. Furthermore, as in the case of the American *imperium*,

there exist outside the official frontiers of the Soviet Union a cluster of satellite nations occupying most of Eastern Europe, whose status as independent states is nothing more than a polite diplomatic fiction.

The same holds good of Communist China, where Tibetans have been forcibly subjugated to the alien yoke of Peking and have been decimated by deliberate genocide. Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan) is the homeland of people of Turkish origin, to whom the Chinese are alien masters. It is typical of the twisted ideas which are accepted as truth by brain-washed humanity throughout the world today that these three modern empires have passed themselves off successfully as homogeneous nations in the eyes of many people, and have thus escaped the moral condemnation which ignorant world opinion has inflicted upon the older colonial empires of Western Europe.

The growth in power and prosperity of these three modern empires, posing as huge nations, and the corresponding decline in power and prosperity of the Western European nations, has given birth to a theory that no nation of moderate size can any longer survive or "go it alone" (to use a hideous piece of modern jargon) unless it merges its individual independence in some sort of super state. Hence comes the attempt to amalgamate six nations of Western Europe into the Common Market—an idea which, in spite of its harmless sounding commercial name, aims at no less a target than the eventual political union of Western Europe. Strenuous pressure is being exerted from many quarters to inveigle Great Britain into the surrender of her own national independence to this European union. France, after rather precipitately signing the binding Treaty of Rome, has recently shown clearly that she sees ahead the danger to her very existence as an independent nation. It is sincerely to be hoped that the British nation will realize this same danger before permitting their political representatives to sign this fatal treaty.

Another example of this tendency of comparatively smaller states to band together is the so called Afro-Asian bloc. Like the Common Market idea, this tendency of the Afro-Asians has in part been brought about by the notion that small nations cannot survive in a world of giants. But, with the Afro-Asians there has been the additional incentive of a supposed solidarity of the "have not" nations against the wealthy and formerly dominant "haves". For this reason the atttempted alliance of Afro-Asian peoples is likely to have a far more serious impact on the international history of the next decade than is the Common Market, whether the latter succeeds in enrolling Great Britain among its members or not.

The importance of the Afro-Asian conglomeration is not due to any likelihood of its ever becoming a great power in the strategic or diplomatic or even in the economic sense. Such unity of purpose

as its member states have achieved has been merely the unity of prominent Afro-Asian politicians, cemented by a common hatred—the hatred which western-educated men feel against the Europeans (whether they be British, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, or Belgian) who have raised the Afro-Asian countries out of barbarism, tyrannous superstition, corruption, unsanitary living conditions, sloth, and poverty.

The nations of Western Europe are hated by the intelligentsia of all these formerly primitive or ill-governed lands with the bitter hatred of those who owe a debt of gratitude, which they know that they can never repay, and which many of the indebted ones have not the honesty to admit.

These western-educated natives see today their countries peaceful, well governed, and (as far as concerns the humble masses) happy and contented under the same European influences which brought these blessings to backward lands. They see all this, and it naturally occurs to them that they themselves, the educated stratum of their own country, could be and ought to be their country's rightful rulers. It is understandably difficult for these western-educated natives to admit in public the immensity of the debt which their motherlands owe to European influence, teaching, and efficient administration.

Hatred is perhaps too strong a term to apply to the anti-colonialism felt by Afro-Asian nationalists of an earlier generation. Men, such as Jawarharlal Nehru and Vidalabhai Patel received their education in Great Britain. Nehru retained all through his life a respect, amounting almost to affection, for much that was English or British. Though he and his contemporaries chafed under British rule, their dislike was aimed only at the Raj as a political system and contained little or no bitterness or personal hostility to the British officials whose duties took them to India.

During this earlier phase of anti-colonialism many young Indians established close friendships with British fellow students. Somewhat naturally these friendships were more easily made with undergraduates of left-wing outlook. An important and (for the British Empire) fatal consequence of these Anglo-Indian contacts was the spread of anti-colonial sentiments throughout British intelligentsia of the left or left-centre. From these contacts British political life and the Indian and Colonial Civil Services became strongly infiltrated by men of so-called progressive views, whose mildest interpretation of British imperial destiny was that of a purely temporary duty, to be discharged and ended as soon as possible, and whose views in many cases involved a feeling of guilt for what the progressives masochistically called the shameful record of British rule.

If the creed of anti-colonialism had continued to be limited to

these earlier nationalists of the Nehru type and their pale-pink British intellectual friends, it is probable that the British Empire would gradually have evolved into a loose alliance, very much more harmonious and useful than the Commonwealth of today. It is even possible that it might have remained an empire of self-governing countries, linked by loyalty to an imperial monarch and by common policies of defence and trade.

But the existence of anti-colonialism, even in its early and mild form, offered the enemies of Great Britain an opportunity too good to be missed. Inducements were provided, both by the United States and the Soviet Union, for Afro-Asian students to pursue their studies in America or Russia rather than in Great Britain as their predecessors had done. Brash and ambitious young Africans attended American universities, assisted in this by grants from the Ford Foundation or other disinterested benefactors. They returned home primed with the American viewpoint and adorned with learned degrees or doctorates. In fact the title of Doctor soon became as indispensable for aspiring African dictators as that of General had been fashionable among Latin-American dictators of the nineteenth century.

At the same time other young Afro-Asians were encouraged to complete their education in Moscow or Peking, or in the special college in Tashkent, which the Soviet Government established long ago for the indoctrination of young Asiatics with anti-colonialism of the violent Marxist brand.

Thus anti-colonialism—a movement which, in its origins, was just a legitimate and indeed laudable instinct for patriots of any land that was not quite free—quickly became something a great deal more sinister. It was quickly seized upon by men of evil intent, men with hatred in their hearts toward Christian civilization and toward the social philosophy which the colonizing nations of Western Europe had spread throughout the world. Above all, the new instigators of anti-colonialism were men filled with jealousy of the British Empire itself, which their study of history told them had been in the past, and still was, a strong bulwark against nihilism and chaos. The anti-colonialist movement, starting originally as a reasonable urge in the hearts of patriots, has now become a vehicle for bitter and vicious racial hatred.

Not by any means all anti-colonialists are tinged with racial hatred. There are still many decent and moderate patriots in the nations of Africa and Asia. For every one such patriot there are several millions of his compatriots in whose hearts anti-colonialism does not really exist at all. If and when they appear to show anti-colonialist feelings, they do so only because they have been intimidated, or because (like mobs of any colour) they have been momentarily stirred by the

glib or fiery words of an eloquent agitator. Sometimes, it must be admitted, anti-colonialist demonstrations of impressive size and sincerity can be and have been mobilized on the basis of a small cash payment to every participant. Individually it would probably be true to say that the mind of every participant in mob activity is normally quite free from any hatred at all. But hatred is a disease to which mobs are singularly prone, particularly when it is instilled by those who know how to do it.

So much for the composition of anti-colonialism among Afro-Asians themselves. Among Europeans likewise it is extremely unusual to find believers in anti-colonialism who are inspired with a conscious hatred. Most of them are scholarly intellectuals, bespectacled and mild, whose aspirations are freedom for all men and other impeccable ideals. Archbishops, ministers of religion of all denominations, university professors, dear old ladies, and hard-headed businessmen whose politics are mildly liberal—all these and many other pillars of respectable society are to be found in the ranks of those who consider colonialism an outworn relic of rather a disreputable past. No matter what some of us may think of their political perception or judgement of history, it would be ridiculous to ascribe any conscious hatred to these worthy citizens.

Therein lies the danger. Behind all the well-intended advocacy of "majority rule" or of racial equality or of integration which is innocently preached by kindly and progressive people of all races, there is a savage determination on the part of a few evil men to use this anti-colonial movement as a weapon for the utter destruction of Western European civilization and of the Christianity on which it is based.

Who are these evil men? They fall into three categories. First come the rabidly extreme African nationalists. A man like Dr. N'Krumah, for example, cannot seriously be called a believer in democracy or rule by a majority of voters. Why then did he take such a prominent lead in trying to dictate to Great Britain that she shall crush the white government of Rhodesia by force? It can hardly be supposed that he is genuinely concerned for the voting powers of African Rhodesians, for he paid scanty attention to the votes of his own people. He and others like him are quite obviously imbued with an intense hatred for any vestige of white rule in Africa. To him and to those who think like him the River Zambezi is a frontier which has got to be cracked open, as soon as possible, so that the hordes of Black Africa may sweep through to the Cape, mopping up the Portuguese on either flank in Angola and Mozambique, and pushing the white people of South Africa, Boers and Britons, into the sea.

The second category comprises the Communists of all countries

including those, both open Communists and fellow-travellers that we have among us in this country. They are to be found too in South Africa and in Rhodesia itself. Very likely they exist among the white Portuguese of Angola and Mozambique—a fifth column south of the Zambezi.

Thirdly come the governments of the United States, the Soviet Union, and Communist China, respectively, who, for what they believe to be their own respective interests, are actively supporting Afro-Asian intransigence in its various forms. It may seem strange to those with logical minds, for example, to see the United States, the inventors of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence, pillorying Rhodesia for having followed the American example. It may seem equally inconsistent that this same great nation, who only abolished slavery within its own bounds a hundred years ago, and who, even today, is stubbornly resisting the grant of equal social and political rights to its own Negro citizens, should have butted into what is a purely domestic matter between Great Britain and Rhodesia, and should have done so in the guise of a champion of Negro rights.

It is just as extraordinary that Russia, whose tanks crushed Hungarian nationalism in the streets of Budapest twelve years ago, should now be posing as another champion of nationalism (black only) in southern Africa.

These phenomena are only puzzling if one fails to realize that all these disparate champions of black majority rule in Rhodesia are unwitting stooges of mischief-making wire-pullers behind the scenes. Of all these opponents of Mr. Ian Smith's régime only the rabid African nationalist extremists approach, in their avowed aims, the hidden ambitions of the wire-pullers. As to the rest, they are blinded by idealistic dreams in some cases or by narrow economic or political schemes of their own in the cases of the United States and the Soviet Union. The former, pursuing the line of international intrigue which paid them such a handsome dividend at Abadan, have seen their financiers, salesmen, and technicians step smartly into many a vacuum since then, evacuated by the scuttling British. It is natural that they should wish to continue this profitable game by taking over financial, commerial, and technical domination of all southern Africa, as soon as the present white inhabitants shall be evicted and replaced by black dictatorships.

The private aims of the two great Communist powers are just as obvious, though political rather than mercenary. Communist strategy is merely following the guiding principle of Lenin—that the conquest of London and Paris should be achieved by way of Asia and Africa.

Little do the American, Russian, or Chinese politicians, who all fondly imagine that the game that they are all playing will benefit their own respective plots, realize that they, no less than the West

European civilization against which they are plotting, will suffer from the ultimate and hidden plans of the wire-pullers, whom these dupes are all blindly serving. As to the anti-Rhodesians of pale pink hue—the bishops, university dons, and the millions of decent simple men, who complacently deem themselves to be progressives of a moderate liberalism, all these good well-meaning people would be horrified, did they but realize the full impact of the present tension along the Zambezi.

It is naïve beyond measure to believe that Zambia is really so anxious about her supply of electricity from the Kariba plant that she genuinely feels it essential that British troops should occupy the power station, which happens to stand on the south bank of the river. Every Zambian of reasonable intelligence from Dr. Kaunda downward knows perfectly well that Mr. Smith has not the faintest intention of sabotaging the works, except in one eventuality which he has made perfectly clear—namely, a military invasion of Rhodesian territory. The people who are clamouring for such an invasion to be launched (African politicians) must either be incredibly stupid or playing a double game. They are certainly not stupid.

Stripped of all its pious verbiage and double talk the plot discloses itself as an attempt to jockey Great Britain into the crass folly of using British troops to knock the first hole in the defences of southern Africa, the sole remaining bastion of civilization in the whole continent. It will suit the extremist Negro nationalists admirably if British troops are sent to the Rhodesian side of the Zambezi, thus igniting a white civil war. The defences of southern Africa will be breached, and through the gap will pour the black torrent, and it will not stop short of the Cape.

The Rhodesian crisis has arisen simply because at long last a determined stand has been made in the dismal retreat of white civilization before black barbarism. That is why the obstinacy of Ian Smith and his supporters has roused so much fury throughout a brain-washed world. The enemies of European civilization had, as they rightly thought, got us on the run. Position after position had been abandoned by western civilization without even a pretence of resistance. Brain-washing by press, radio, political platform, and religious pulpit, had been so thorough that the whole white race, so it seemed, had come to accept without question the inevitability of scuttle, decline, and collapse. Then suddenly a small white community, which in less than half a century had turned barbarian chaos into prosperity and progress for whites and blacks alike, resolutely refused to sign its own death warrant as a civilized nation. British territories by the dozen had declared their independence previously, often after campaigns of terror against indigenous loyalists. All these previous demands for independence had won the

warm approval of the wire-pullers and of their brain-washed stooges of every colour and creed. For all these previous declarations of independence had conformed to the master plan.

But this Rhodesian affair was just the opposite—a spoke in the wheel of the conspiratorial chariot. White men had shown the audacity to stand up boldly and refuse to be crushed under the wheels. At once their bid for independence, in strong contrast to the heroic Mau-Mau and Eoka sagas, became branded as U.D.I.—a new and horrible crime against humanity.

How ridiculous appears the virtuous indignation of world opinion when regarded in the light of calm common sense! How distinctly the true cause of so much hubbub stands out when the smoke screen dissipates. It is simply the fury of determined men, who have seen an unexpected check to their scheming, just as all seemed already in their hands. The crisis on the Zambezi is, in fact, a decisive battle, perhaps the final decisive battle, in a great war for the very survival of Christian civilization. If Rhodesia goes down before the torrent of black nationalism, whether she goes down fighting or is starved into surrender by means of economic sanctions, a vitally important line of defence for the whole southern tip of Africa will have crumbled. Every such loss of a strong position makes it increasingly difficult for the retreating army to stand firmly again. It may prove to be one of the decisive battles of the world. Unfortunately Great Britain, or at any rate its present government, acting as usual in the role of ventriloquist's dummy to America, is fighting this battle on the wrong side.

If Rhodesia falls, South Africa and the two flanking Portuguese territories will be next on the list. But the analogy of normal war must not be carried too far, for a new technique altogether is being employed by the attackers.

The expression black torrent, used a few paragraphs back, is a figure of speech that should not be taken too literally. If the threatened black African onslaught against the white civilization of southern Africa were to take the form of actual invasion by the armies of Ghana, Tanzania, or any of the others, the Rhodesians, the South Africans, and the Portuguese could await the enemy with calm imperturbability, if not with contempt. The contrast between the bold words of Messrs N'Krumah, Nyere, and Company, and their second thoughts on meeting with rebuff, is some indication of the unreality behind their threats. They are unlikely to launch their regular armies against Rhodesia's quarter-million of stout-hearted whites.

The African invasion, if it takes place at all, will not be made by armies of the orthodox type or even by impis after the older fashion of Matabele or Zulu wars. It will be made by the stealthy infiltration

across the Zambezi of small parties of saboteurs and terrorists. The length of frontier to be watched, rather than the martial prowess of the invaders, will be the chief problem to be faced by the defenders of civilization.

But those who are plotting the subjugation of all southern Africa would far rather achieve their aim without having to fight the forces of civilization at all even in this comparatively safe way. It is for this reason that they set so much store upon bringing Rhodesia to her knees by means of the pressure of so-called world opinion, which might be more accurately called the pressure of the wire-pullers who control not only the United Nations Organization but the finances and trade of most of the world as well.

The Rhodesian crisis has been studied at some length because it provides an alarming foretaste of how international affairs will be managed, if ever humanity submits to rule by one world government. Whatever may be the outcome—whether Ian Smith's stand on the Zambezi succeeds or fails—the situation as we see it today is simply this. A small, but highly civilized and hard-working community (less than a quarter of a million white people) are standing out, under their properly elected government, for what they consider a just and vital cause. Whether they are right or not is immaterial to my present point, which is that the entire world, outside their community, is being marshalled and organized for the purpose of crushing the will of that quarter-million community. It is a fantastic lie to claim that world opinion as a whole is incensed against the Smith régime. We know perfectly well that, even in Great Britain, a very large proportion of our people are fully in sympathy with Smith's cause. Is it likely, then, that the people of France and Italy, of the United States, of the Scandinavian countries, of Switzerland or any of the other fifty or more countries only remotely concerned, have had any real opportunity of studying the merits of Smith's case? Are we to suppose that after careful and impartial consideration, all these millions of people have decided against the white Rhodesians?

Of course not. Most of the world's population has even less knowledge of the issues at stake than have the voters of Great Britain. And yet it is claimed that the imposition of sanctions by all nations against this allegedly criminal government in Rhodesia, is an expression of the disapproval of mankind for the crime of U.D.I. What it really is (and this is a very grim fact) amounts to a mobilization of humanity, willy-nilly, and quite regardless of humanity's sense of justice, in order to coerce a small community into a pattern which happens to suit an oligarchy of unelected men, who by wealth or other sources of strength have already concentrated in their own hands most of the powers which a future world government will possess. We see Rhodesia today standing almost alone against the

theoretically irresistible force of economic sanctions, coupled with the ultimate threat of United Nations military action. Let us remember that white Rhodesians believe their cause to be just, no matter what other people may think. Their plight today may be that of our own country tomorrow, if some world government of the future orders us to commit national suicide. For the freedom of small nations let us pray that white Rhodesia may win this Battle of the Zambezi even against the rest of a dragooned and indoctrinated humanity.

13

RACIALISM, NATIONALISM, AND PATRIOTISM

I AM fully aware that some of my views in the last chapter may lay me open to the charge of racialism—that modern term of reproach which is used by the iconoclasts of existing things in order to smear the upholders of common sense. It is a risk that must be accepted, for it is high time that some of the nonsense, uttered about race and nationhood, should be publicly challenged and refuted.

Like every other human factor racialism is evil only when taken to excess. In this respect, as in many others, it may be compared with sexuality. Both are based on an undeniable fact. It can no more validly be denied that humanity consists of diverse races than that it consists of two distinct sexes. Racialism is a word not to be found in the older dictionaries, so its precise meaning is debatable. If it merely means an interest in the diversity of humanity and a philosophy based on the fact of human diversity, then it is a harmless and indeed natural outlook, which all reasonable people must share. Those who hold that the division of humanity into diverse races is something evil, which must be abolished by planned mongrelization, are, in effect, blasphemers, for they set the alleged wisdom of progressive humanism above the wisdom of the world's Creator. Most normal people are prepared to recognize that mankind does consist of diverse races, and build their plans for the future of mankind upon that fact.

The iconoclasts, however, are not reasonable people. They are so strongly obsessed by the fact that racialism (as defined above) is sometimes carried to extremes in a minority of human minds that this has produced in their own minds an idea that *all* racialism is evil and must be abolished. They are thus on a par with other unbalanced people, who are so strongly obsessed with sexuality, as carried to excess by a minority, that the whole idea of sex becomes abhorrent to them. As in one case so also in the other, this unbalanced view leads to unnatural approaches to the facts of life, which in turn bring disastrous results.

Modern iconoclasts—enemies of all that is normal, natural, and

therefore traditional in human society—base their entire process of thought upon a series of preconceived notions, most of which are false. The idea of the equality of man, for example, is a favourite starting point for iconoclastic or left-wing nihilist thought. A moment's reflection will show that there is no basis of truth whatsoever in the theory, in so far as it deals with the affairs of this world. It is true enough that *in the sight of God* we are all equal, and this fact is often quoted by earnest though misguided Christians as an argument in favour of Christian support for socialist and other left-wing views. There is not a word in the Bible to support the preposterous theory that individual humans in this earthly life are equal or that God intends them to be. On the contrary there is abundant evidence to the opposite effect.

The parable of the talents, to say nothing of many teachings of Our Lord to his disciples ("To *you* it is given to know the mysteries . . . but to *others* in parables") all show that God's plan for this world does *not* include human equality. Christianity itself is based upon the duty of individuals to help one another. What need of help if all are equally capable?

Quite apart from religion, plain common sense should show us clearly that equality is non-existent. It does not even exist among animals. Take a clutch of goose eggs from one mother and set them under one hen. Three goslings hatch out, as like as three green peas. Yet, within a week, you will find one of them taking the lead and maintaining it throughout their communal life. This is not a matter of sex, for the leader may be gander or goose. Nor is it a matter of size or strength—simply of personality. If this can happen in this lower stratum of life, how much likelier is it to do so with humans?

Starting, as it does, from a blind disregard for one of the basic facts of nature—inequality—it is easy to see why left-wing progressive thought leads its followers into more profound errors. For, if individual humans are not equal, it is impossible that human communities should be equal either, whether they be races, nations, or merely football teams. If proof be needed for this very reasonable assumption we find plenty of proof all round us.

The races of man are not equal. Some—the older races of Europe, deriving benefit from the stored knowledge of many ancient Mediterranean civilizations and from centuries of life in temperate climates—have shown themselves to be capable of developing certain arts and crafts to more complicated degrees than the non-European races have achieved unaided. Similarly the races of Asia, benefiting from the same ancient civilizations of the Levant, have taken the lead in launching the world's great religions and philosophies. Certain other races, such as the Aztecs of Mexico, the Incas of Peru, or the

ancient Khmers of Cambodia, even without benefit of instruction from Mediterranean sources, have produced social systems of a very high order in their day.

Yet it must be accepted that the African races, despite the advantages of contact with the ancient civilizations in the Nile valley or with the Phoenicians who built Zimbabwe, have by themselves produced practically nothing of scientific, or architectural, or any other mentally remarkable value.

This does not mean that the Negro race is inferior in every respect to the more fortunately endowed races mentioned above. Physically they are stronger and tougher than nearly all non-negroid races. The predominance of Negroes in the heavyweight boxing world suggests that man for man in the endurance of physical blows—particularly to the head—Negroes surpass men of most other races. We are all of us inferior in some things and superior in others. This applies to us both individually and as communities.

Then there is confusion in some minds concerning the slight variations of meaning between the concepts of race and nation. The former always refers to membership of one or other of the species into which humanity is divided. Race is a matter of lineage—or descent from a common stock. But the term nation has acquired, through careless popular use, two or three different meanings which have nothing to do with this word's etymological derivation. For the word derives from the Latin *natus* (born). So strictly the word nation should mean people born of the same stock. In fact it should be synonymous with race.

It is significant that modern dictionaries still include this original meaning of nation, but they also give such alternatives as "people inhabiting the same country" or "people under the same government" (Chambers) or else "people speaking the same language" (Cassell's). The latter authority also gives the two definitions supplied by Chambers.

This dissertation on dictionaries is no mere verbal quibble. The lexicographers have faithfully represented the evolution of human societies and the resultant ambiguity of word-meaning which George Orwell has called double-speak.

Cassell's linguistic definition of a nation is obviously incorrect. Many nations are multilingual (Belgians, Swiss, Yugoslavs, Indians, Indonesians, Chinese) and conversely many who speak English are not British. The same applies to the French, Spanish, Arabic, and Portuguese languages, for these are the native tongues of millions who are not citizens of France, Spain, Arabia, or Portugal.

We must eliminate language as being a useless complication of an already sufficiently complicated matter. But we have to admit that in our modern world there has come to be a modicum of truth in

the other two definitions of nation, etymologically incorrect though they may be. In practice it is true to say that *some* nations consist of "people inhabiting the same country" and "under one government", no matter whether these people are of one race or not. To say this does not mean that we consider this to be a sound basis for nationhood. We are simply recognizing the fact that some nations today (such as Brazil) come under this heading.

There are then in the world of today nations of different types. There are nations of the original mono-racial type and others that are still very nearly mono-racial. Examples are the Scandinavian countries, France, Spain, Italy, Afghanistan, and China. Great Britain belonged to this category till a few years ago. They may be called mono-racial nations, for even if minorities of alien stock exist, the original stock predominates.

A second category comprises multi-racial nations—i.e., those wherein exist communities stemming from several different racial origins, but in which each community preserves its own culture and separate social existence. Examples of this type are Canada (British and French racial stock), Belgium (Flemish and Walloon), Switzerland (Germanic, French, Italian, and Romansch), South Africa (British, Boer, and Bantu), Yugloslavia (Serb, Croat, and Slovene) and, to a lesser extent, Spain (Castillian, Catalan, and Basque). The important point about this multi-racial type of nation is that each racial community preserves its own individuality and is assisted in doing so by deliberate national policy. Sometimes the arrangement works smoothly, as in Switzerland and (in former times) Canada. In other cases it works partially. But in some there is friction, as in Canada today, in South Africa (as concerns Bantu apartheid). In a third type (Belgium, Spain, or Yugoslavia), though there exists a remnant of inter-communal tension, it is gradually being worn down.

There is however another type of multi-racial nation, dear to the hearts of left-wing progressives, who sometimes prefer to call it a non-racial nation—a term, incidentally almost as ridiculously impossible as a sexless community.

By this term (the non-racial nation) the progressives mean a nation in which the ingredients, of diverse racial stocks, must not be allowed to continue their own respective ways of life but must be integrated into one homogeneous society. This plan is carried out in various ways and with varying degrees of success.

The integrated nation can be seen at its best in newly settled countries, such as the United States or, as regards whites only, Australia. New Zealand falls almost within this category, though not quite on account of the Maori race and culture, which was there before the white men came. The essential for complete success in forging a new nation out of an integrated medley thus seems to be

an absence of any older culture or race in the country so to be populated. White immigrants have flowed from nearly all the world into the United States and Australia, but they came gradually in digestible quantities, with the result that they could be absorbed into the predominantly Anglo-Saxon stock who were already there. In the process of being absorbed they have slightly modified the characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon stock (an American or Australian of today can easily be distinguished from an Englishman). In these few cases integration can be accounted a success, for it has produced a brand new nation.

But it is important to note the essential conditions for the success of integration as a means of nation-building. First, the newly grafted stock must be introduced gradually and in small doses, so that it may be absorbed by the existing stock instead of swamping the latter. Second the new stock must be of a racial type not too dissimilar from the existing stock. Thus in the United States the various white ingredients (but not the black) have managed to integrate fairly well into a new and homogeneous nation, and an attempt is now being made to carry the process onward to cover both white and black. In Australia, where the aborigines present only a very minor problem, they can be left in peace to continue their separate existence, rather on the same lines as the gypsies of Europe.

It is a great mistake—and one far too frequently made—to assume that difficulties of integration are a question of colour. The difficulty is one of culture rather than colour. In Canada, for example, British and French Canadians are both white. Yet, after nearly two hundred years of sharing the same nationality, the French Canadians have mysteriously been roused by some mischief-making agency to revive the ancient quarrels of the Seven Years War. In contrast we find that in New Zealand the two races, Maori and white, seem able to live harmoniously alongside one another as one united nation of two distinct and segregated cultures.

To sum the matter up, there are in the modern world nations of at least four kinds, namely:

(a) Mono-racial (or practically so—with only some trifling community of alien stock).
(b) Multi-racial (wherein diverse racial communities live as one nation without integrating).
(c) Neo-racial (where integration of immigrant stocks has succeeded in creating a new nation).
(d) Mongrel (where integration has failed, due to the incompatibility of the merging stocks owing to excessive dissimilarity).

It is safe to affirm that the last-named will *never* produce a great nation in the true sense of the word. History abounds with proofs of

that melancholy fact, and the reason for it is very simple and clear. Merely to live together in one country is not a sufficiently strong sentimental tie to make people feel that they are true members of one nation. There must exist a common pride in something which is a cut above merely material considerations. Pride in this sense is not a fault, for it is almost synonymous with love.

Patriotism is regarded by many progressives today as an anachronism. But why? All dictionaries agree upon the definition of patriotism as "love of one's country", and in this sense love and pride are synonymous. To create a real nation out of several millions, living in the same country, one must instil in them at least a modicum of this worthy sentiment, otherwise the huge mass of people will have no more solidarity than any crowd of people, happening to be travelling in the same train. These have certain material interests in common but nothing more. Patriotism, in fact, despite the smears of rabid internationalists, is the cement which turns a horde of people into a nation. Furthermore, for a nation to be great in spirit the patriotism of its people must be strong and *proud*.

This pride must be the unaggressive but hearty pride of ancestry, race, and tradition. It does not matter much if some of the new immigrants continue to take pride in their own particular race, ancestry, history, tradition or culture. It is, in fact, far better that they should cling to these old roots, perhaps even for several generations, and thus remain a peculiar people within the nation, than that they should lose all sense of pride in anything. The latter is inevitable if racial or cultural communities are forced by outside pressures to abandon their distinctive characteristics and to lose themselves in an integrated or mongrelized society.

Nation building, when it becomes the plaything of fools, can be as dangerous as deliberate genocide by machine guns or gas ovens. The very existence of the British nation, in the form which it possessed when it built the Empire—nay, rather in the form which it possessed when it stood up to Hitler only a quarter-century ago—is in grave peril.

For racialism, besides being a natural human trait, only evil when indulged to excess, is also a two-way traffic. At this moment it is being indulged to excess, both in Africa and in Great Britain, in the form of pro-black and anti-white discrimination, practised not only by Negroes but by large numbers of well meaning but woefully misguided white people all over the world.

14

INGREDIENTS OF NATIONAL GREATNESS

NATIONAL greatness, we have seen, depends on a lot more than material size or strength. In the family of nations today there are some, geographically vast and well endowed with natural resources, who do not stand very high in world influence or respect. There are others, small in extent, poor in resources, and with populations of only a few millions, but whose status is honourably assured. What then is the secret of greatness?

First, a nation must be truly a nation and not merely a crowd of people, living for convenience in one country. There must be both patriotism and a sense of solidarity—of belonging to one united and reasonably happy family. This criterion at once bars countries whose inhabitants have either lost or never possessed a decent pride in that country's history and culture.

Obviously those countries, which have absorbed huge numbers of immigrants, have, in this respect, an extra handicap to overcome—a handicap not encountered by countries, the bulk of whose inhabitants stem from a long indigenous ancestry. Where there are immigrants, they must first be themselves endowed with patriotism, and with a decent pride in their new country, its history, culture, and way of life, before they can become a source of strength to their new nation instead of weakness.

We have seen in the last chapter how in some countries new or alien elements have successfully been absorbed, how in others they survive as separate racial minorities, and how in others they swamp the old indigenous stock, thus replacing the former by a mongrelized population without any roots in true patriotism. It is rare indeed, if not impossible, to find any nation of modern or older history, whose stature among the nations has been enhanced by the acceptance of massive immigration from elsewhere. America is no exception to this dictum. Admittedly she has grown from crude redskin ways of life to the status of the world's richest nation. But this was no instance of an existing nation being *strengthened*. The redskin race (culture, nation, or what we like to call it) was almost exterminated and an entirely new nation was built in its place.

The first desideratum for a nation that wishes to go on living and

retain its national characteristics, is that it should limit immigration both in numbers and quality. In this respect the most vigorously national nations are seen to be those who have admitted only comparatively few immigrants, and those mainly limited to people of similar, and so of easily assimilable, cultures. The most disastrous results are to be seen in those nations who have gone to the other extreme.

It is not only the quality but the numerical size of the immigrant stream that affects the greatness of a nation. Every country has an optimum density of population, which can, to a limited extent, be stretched by industrial development or other artificial means, but which always imposes an upper limit, beyond which further cramming of that country with people will cause a deterioration and not an increase of its true strength and prosperity. For this question of an optimum density is not just a material question of how many can be profitably employed in a given area, nor even of how many can be housed, fed, and watered there. It is a question of human health, happiness, comfort, and the ability of families to lead a full life in given conditions of over-population. No country can exceed its optimum density of population without lowering the moral fibre of its people. At present England itself (excluding other parts of the United Kingdom) has a population of nearly eight hundred to the square mile, making us one of the most densely populated areas in the world. This affects such social problems as education, hospitals, rural preservation, housing, road traffic, accidents, crime, and is therefore a factor seriously affecting the moral fibre of the nation.

Assuming a nation to have safeguarded its own national character in these two ways, what next is required? There is let us suppose a population of manageable density, mainly composed of people of the ancestral indigenous stock. They may, as in our case, have lapsed from the religious faith of their forefathers. They may also have grown up in complete ignorance of their country's history. Without the former no nation can be great. Without the latter a decent pride in one's country cannot be expected, for the people know nothing of which to be proud. Therefore, given a nation of healthy population-density, and of the right human stock, the next essential is a sound educational curriculum. It is not enough to turn children into brilliant scientists and technicians or to cram them through a series of "O" and "A" levels. We must produce citizens spiritually, morally, and intellectually worthy of a great nation.

This of course runs counter to the fashionable theories of today, particularly as regards religious teaching. Admittedly this is a difficult point. One cannot ram religious faith into someone who has not got it, in the same way that one can ram a knowledge of electricity or law. Religious faith, once lost by a nation, is extremely

difficult to restore, largely because the teaching staff of that nation will themselves be without faith.

Yet no nation can be really great unless its people sincerely hold some deep religious faith. The Soviet Union itself is no exception to this rule because there the false religion of Marxist-Leninism has temporarily filled the gap. The essential is that citizens should feel an urge to do great things for what they hold to be a noble motive. Even a false religion can produce this urge for a time, though the existence of the Berlin Wall shows that eventually its falsity becomes apparent to many of its devotees.

At this moment it is doubtful whether the British people as a whole are interested in any ideal higher than their own pay packets. The Christian religion, once the inspiration of much that was finest in the lives and works of most of the great builders of the Empire, now holds sway only in the minds and hearts of a minority. Patriotism, the other great driving force that has made men and women of our nation put the good of our country before all selfish personal considerations, is now derided as an old-fashioned mental aberration or condemned as something akin to Nazism. A first step in the renaissance of Great Britain will be to give its people a sense of purpose somewhat higher than "having it so good". How this may be done will be studied in the next chapter.

As in all great and worth-while enterprises the first step will be the most difficult. One often hears it said by thoughtful people, who realize the low state into which our nation has temporarily fallen, "If only we had a leader who could rouse the nation again!" True enough, but unforunately a nation gets the leaders that it deserves. Can we expect a leader to arise from a nation so sunk in apathy and selfish contempt for higher things? We were granted such a man in the nick of time a quarter-century ago, but it must be remembered that he belonged to a class of society, nurtured on religion and patriotism, which is now almost extinct.

15

OUR BRITISH TASK

FIRST things must come first. Earnest patriots often talk of plans for rebuilding the shattered Empire, or something like it, on a basis of a federation of the white nations plus, perhaps, a selected few of the other Commonwealth members who still retain a genuine loyalty toward the monarchy or toward the British way of life or toward some other unifying sentiment.

But this is putting the cart before the horse. Nothing on earth will persuade other nations of the Commonwealth (even those nearest akin to us) to rally round the old country and allow themselves to be solidified into an effective federation of British nations, while the people of the United Kingdom fail to show any cause for deserving the respect of others. The renaissance of the British world has got to begin at the heart. The people of this country must stop fussing about the outside world for the time being and concentrate upon putting their own house in order.

The very first step must be to ensure for ourselves a completely free hand in this entirely domestic job. What we do in our own country should be no concern of any outsiders, and we must start by making it very clear to all concerned that we mean to enforce this. It will not be at all easy, as the current Rhodesian crisis shows. We are living in the heyday of international busybodies. There is no knowing what social feature in the internal life of our nation may not, in a year or so, be deemed by the United Nations (or by some African demagogue) to be a danger to international peace. We will have to declare a form of armed neutrality and maintain it firmly until we have put our own affairs into order and are ready once more to take our place in the counsels of the world.

This may involve withdrawal from the United Nations. If so, the loss will not be ours. If that overrated organization cannot survive without the British subscription, it will be incumbent upon other nations, conspicuous hitherto for their failure to contribute, to wake up and start taking their fair share of the financial burden.

Coupled with this must come a detachment of Great Britain from her present entanglement in the so-called East-West conflict, which in reality is a conflict between Dollar imperialism and Communist

imperialism. It is, in fact, a cold war between America and Russia, with China (fortunately for the rest of the world) opposed to both of them. There is nothing that would suit the peoples of all other countries better than to be able to opt out of this impending war of the three giants. If only these three could be left to fight it out among themselves, without dragging the rest of the world into a nuclear holocaust, the advocates of non-alignment would be among the sanest of mankind. Unfortunately, as matters stand at present, non-alignment really means nothing more than a lapse of the non-aligned country into the Communist camp. This is simply because America and Russia at present share between them the monopoly of nuclear power. Consequently, unless one of the smaller nations kow-tows to American leadership, it will not share the American nuclear umbrella and so, before long, finds itself vulnerable to diplomatic persuasion from either Moscow or Peking.

All that is needed to break this evil shadow, which hangs over smaller nations, is for one among the world's great powers (former or actual) to have the courage to take a stand for *sane* neutrality, having previously provided itself with just enough nuclear power to deter any one of the three great monsters from throwing its weight about unduly.

There is no country in the world better qualified to take this stand than Great Britain. It would be fully in keeping with our traditional diplomacy of playing the balance of power game in order to prevent the whole world being dominated by one great power or combination of great powers. Great Britain could save mankind from the present nuclear nightmare as she has already saved mankind five times during the past four hundred years—namely from Philip II of Spain, Louis XIV, Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm, and Hitler.

But, most important of all, such a stand by Great Britain would provide our nation with just that great and noble purpose in life which is needed to restore the nation's soul and to lift us out of the present slough of despond. For, let there be no mistake—to break away from the present Atlantic complex and to make a firm stand for a sane neutrality, backed by force, will demand not only immense courage on the part of our statesmen but a strong sense of crusading purpose on the part of our nation as a whole. We shall be challenging a preconceived notion of international politics which has become so firmly rooted in our own minds as to have become almost a sacred truth—namely the theory that Anglo-American friendship must be eternal, even at the cost of letting our own country be practically run by America.

Not only this, but we will also be defying the immense power of international finance, whose grand scheme for the future of mankind relies at this stage upon shepherding all the nations into one or other

of two sheep-folds—the Communist and the anti-Communist folds—and keeping us all neatly marshalled there.

Any attempt to release ourselves and other nations therefrom will draw upon us the full fury of the wire-pullers, expressed through all the propaganda means at their disposal—press, radio, television, and the utterances of their tame spokesmen throughout the world, whether they be journalists, statesmen, or self-appointed experts on this, that, or the other aspect of international affairs. We shall, in fact, at once be blackguarded throughout the world as an outlaw nation, an offender against humanity, even as Rhodesia today is being blackguarded by what is humorously called world opinion.

Indeed the prospect may seem to the fainthearted to be much too grim to be faced. But is it really so? The world today is witnessing in Rhodesia an act of defiance by a small and comparatively weak nation against world opinion, as guided by these same formidable and hidden hands which Great Britain also would have to defy if she made a stand for sanity, her own freedom, and the freedom of many other nations. If Rhodesia can defy the hidden power, so could we.

But will Great Britain ever do so? That is the burning question. Our people have become so fond of the easy life, so prone to believe all that they are told on television, radio, or in the national press, so incapable of independent thought, that it is hard at present to imagine a wave of crusading ardour sweeping through them. Our politicians of all parties are so much the mouthpieces of British defeatism that it is almost impossible to imagine any of them sounding the clarion call for British renaissance and independence. Who is likely to take the first bold step—politicians or people, leaders or led? Admittedly at first glance an awakening seems unlikely.

Yet, below the surface of apathy and decay, something seems to be stirring. The closing days of 1965 and the start of 1966 witnessed rumblings of discontent and misgiving within the British Conservative Party. The old blind loyalty of rank-and-file Tories toward the Conservative Central Office, that extraordinary loyalty which for thirteen years meekly and without a murmur of disapproval watched its leaders destroying the British Empire, that amazing loyalty to a party caucus rather than to the country, seems at last to be crumbling. It stands to reason that no effort will be spared by those, whose grip is threatened, to stamp out the incipient revolt and to bring the whole party back to solidarity. Great play will undoubtedly be made with the need to vote Conservative in order to keep the Socialists out of power, and undoubtedly for some time to come this parrot cry will succeed in frightening large numbers of patriotic Britons into voting for official Conservatism, regardless of its thirteen

years' record as a destroyer of the Empire, and its avowed intention to surrender British independence into the Common Market, and its meek acceptance of the anti-Rhodesian policy of our present government.

Much will depend upon the sustained efforts of those few right-wing patriots, who realize that even a continuance of Socialist administration for a few more years will be preferable to perpetuating, and perhaps restoring to power, an allegedly right-wing party, that is no longer right-wing.

It may take quite a long time for the electorate as a whole to come to its senses, and perhaps a few more years of Socialism may speed that happy day. If the present Conservative Party splits into two factions, or even, as seems likely, into three, this may well be a necessary step toward the rebirth of a genuinely right-wing and patriotic parliamentary party—the first essential step toward the renaissance of the British nation. Sooner or later what Mr. Quintin Hogg has called (21st January, 1966) the "moment of truth" is bound to dawn upon the British people. Sooner or later the nation will awaken to the stark reality at present hidden behind the claptrap of politicians and the slanted reportage of a suborned B.B.C. and press.

The only cause for anxiety (and it is a well grounded cause) is the question whether the "moment of truth" will dawn upon the nation in sufficient time to avert irreparable damage. A time may come when the decay has gone too far—when national recovery is impossible. It is a race between decadence and the ever more insistent sounds of a rapidly approaching disaster. It is a time in our history when our very future as a nation may well depend upon a few enlightened patriots. If these lose heart, as well they might after so many years of apparently fruitless struggle, even a slight slackening of their efforts could be fatal. If on the other hand they throw every ounce of their energy relentlessly into the struggle, this apparently trivial extra thrust may just save the situation. It will be a very close thing. Fortunate indeed are those of us who believe that God has a purpose for our nation and does not intend that it should perish. Provided that this faith is coupled with the stalwart motto that "God helps those who help themselves", our timely renaissance as a great nation will be certain, but in order to make it certain we have got to deserve God's help.

Parliamentary power today resides not in the ordinary voters but in one or other of the three closed shops of professional politicians or, to be more precise, in the big financial interests that influence these professionals. Conservatives, Liberals, or Labour—these so-called parties have become great caucuses, cynically conducting a shadow boxing contest with one another. On the really big issues confronting

our country these three caucuses offer no choice at all to the thoughtful elector. Subservience to America, surrender of British independence to the Common Market, excessive immigration, feebleness toward criminals, legal approval for sodomy—these and many other dangers to our country are beyond remedy by constitutional means, simply because all three of our big parliamentary parties refuse to oppose any of these evils. It is a fact which no politician can deny that a very large part of the electorate (possibly more than half of it) strenuously opposes nearly all of these dangers to our country. Yet, no matter which of the three big caucuses come into power, we know that all these hated evils will go on unopposed and unchecked.

The cost of putting a candidate forward for election makes it practically impossible for any independent candidate to get into Parliament—let alone save his deposit of £150. It used to be the fashion in democratic countries to sneer at the Communist electoral system, which is based upon a single list of candidates, all of whom are Communists. Our own system, which limits the voter's choice to two or three pale-pink underminers of our country, is just as undemocratic as the single list system, though perhaps not quite so honest.

Both Spain and Portugal, in the nadir of political chicanery which preceded their renaissance, suffered from a party political system known as rotatism. Though their names differed, the two big parties in each of those countries worked a rotative racket for the mutual benefit of the professional politicians. For a few years the Conservatives held power and enjoyed the flesh-pots. Then came a general election which, by an amicable arrangement among the politicians, gave the Liberals an innings. Not an atom of difference showed itself in the national policies, whichever party was batting.

By the grace of God our own rotative system has not yet descended to that level of cynical corruption, but its denial of true democracy is just as bad. As things stand at present those of us who deplore the decadence of our country—those of us who detest its subservience to America, or who abhor the proposed surrender of our national independence to a cabal of European tycoons, or who wish to keep Great Britain for the British people, or who long for a tougher attitude from the government toward criminals and moral perverts—we are powerless to influence these important matters by our votes. The starry-eyed intellectuals who sit at the seats of power in the central offices of the three big parties will continue blithely on their course, convinced that they know what is good for our country far better than the people who, in blind loyalty to a party label, voted them into power.

Till this vicious and undemocratic rotatism is brought to an end the tide of British renaissance cannot even begin to flood. But there

are signs that the end may be in sight. The Conservative and Liberal parties seem to be doomed to a long period of eclipse—the former because of its internal split and the latter because it has no genuine *raison d'être*. Their eclipse may bring the rotten rotative system to an end. After a period of solitary grandeur the Labour (or Socialist) Party will find itself opposed by a school of public opinion far more effective than the shadow-boxing opposition of the defunct Conservative and Liberal parties. British Socialists will find themselves opposed by a movement sternly devoted to a reversal of the decadent trends from which our country has suffered through the rotative system. Instead of a Conservative Party, posing as right-wing but acting as something very different, there will at last be a political movement which is genuinely right-wing and pro-British. When the "moment of truth" dawns (as Quintin Hogg called it) a great wave of popular indignation may sweep the Socialists out of power in a glorious patriotic revolution.

16

NINE HUNDRED YEARS

NINE hundred years. The story of a nation, brought into being by one of the decisive battles of the world, which merged the racial characteristics of the Anglo-Saxons with those of the Norman-French and the culture of an insular people with that of Latin Europe. The story of how that small nation competed with the great powers of Western Europe for the right to develop the new lands across the Atlantic and in the East. How at first the English fought alone against Spain and later against France to prevent the domination of the world by these two mighty powers of that time. How they outstripped the Portuguese and the Dutch in the race for the trade of India. How they amalgamated with other small nations of the British Isles to form a greater British nation, which in turn civilized vast territories of Asia, Africa, and Australasia.

With all its faults the resultant British Empire brought good and efficient administration where anarchy or tyranny had reigned before, incorruptible justice where bribery had hitherto been regarded as a normal feature of daily life, and inter-communal peace in multi-racial lands that had never known it before. From Waterloo to Mons humanity was spared for a century from global war by British diplomacy, backed by fighting power, keeping a balance of power amid the rivalries of great militaristic continental states. This nation of shopkeepers with its tiny army was neither feared nor suspected of aggressive plans by the continental powers of Europe, grimly though they might fear and suspect one another. Yet this unmilitary nation, thanks to its sea power and the economic strength derived from its mighty empire, was a factor which could never be ignored by the most ambitious continental war lord. Again and again during that century of comparative peace the British Empire, without firing a shot, acted as a restraining influence to localize such conflicts as the Franco-Prussian War or the Austro-Prussian.

Meanwhile, outside Europe, the *Pax Britannica*, based upon sea power and spheres of influence, was maintaining some degree of law and order along the pirate-infested coasts of Arabia, China, and Malaya. This same beneficent paternalism abolished slavery throughout the vast empire a generation before this was done in the United

States. Though the slave-trade itself could never entirely be abolished, it was British sea power that did more than any other agency to keep the trade within bounds, particularly in the Red Sea.

Whatever opinions may be held regarding the benefits to humanity, it can hardly be disputed that the creation of such a mighty edifice as the British Empire by a nation that numbered only about a million and a quarter at the time of Hastings was a remarkable achievement. The rate of building this edifice varied considerably. A start was not made in overseas expansion until the early seventeenth century—five and a half centuries, in fact, after the Battle of Hastings. England got away to a very slow start in this work of empire-building, but from 1600 onward progress was uninterrupted for three hundred years. Many mistakes were made, perhaps the saddest being the quarrel with English transatlantic settlers which resulted, it is true, in the birth of a new English-speaking nation, but one whose endemic antipathy to the old mother country has been largely instrumental in the destruction of the British Empire itself.

In these three hundred years the pace of empire building was at times impressive, as when Canada was secured for the Empire by Wolfe's victory at Quebec, or when Plassey settled the fate of India. At other times expansion was almost imperceptible, but for all that it continued without a check till the death of Queen Victoria.

Then, for the first time since Waterloo, a serious threat appeared on the horizon—the growing sea power of Germany and her evident aspirations for overseas empire.

But the great days of the British were by no means over yet. Twice more during the first half of the twentieth century Great Britain and her Empire had to act as mankind's champion against a would-be world conqueror, making five times in all since 1588 that she performed this service for human freedom. The two great German wars taxed her strength severely because, although she had allies in both wars, it fell to Great Britain and her Empire in both wars to bear the brunt practically alone through the most critical periods. It must not be forgotten that the United States, widely credited today with having played the decisive part in both wars, in actual fact kept out of each of them for the first and most dangerous periods, leaving Great Britain and the Empire to carry on unassisted for a total of five years in wars which eventually had to be admitted to be of vital concern to American interests.

Despite these tremendous demands upon her strength Great Britain and her Empire came through both ordeals with unblemished prestige. It is no exaggeration to claim that in 1945, when the second war ended, Great Britain, though financially almost ruined stood as high as ever in the respect and estimation of the world—particu-

larly in the regard of European countries who had lain under German occupation and whose resistance movements had been nourished, encouraged, and actively assisted by Great Britain.

Then came a sudden and terrible change. Great Britain, whose steadfastness in the dark days of 1940 had won the admiration of all free men, and who had ended the war second to none in honour among the victorious allies, sank in less than twenty years to be a nonentity among the nations. Her magnificent empire disintegrated in less than a twentieth of the time that it had taken our ancestors to build it up. Surely never in history has so great a nation or empire collapsed so ignominiously in so short a time.

I have tried to analyse some of the causes of this catastrophe. Many of the strongest causes may never come to light, for they are the secrets of secret men, but the question is one of academic importance. The grim certainty is quite enough. In some mysterious way the greatest empire in history was demolished in less than twenty years of peace, having taken several hundred years to build and having just survived with untarnished honour and prestige the two biggest wars that the world has so far seen.

But even worse than this befell the British people themselves. That sturdy race, who had achieved such great things in the past and who, as recently as 1940, gave the world an unforgettable example of unquenchable courage and guts—this same nation in the same short twenty years seems to have lost every vestige of its old spirit and character. There again I have tried to suggest some of the reasons but the question again is of academic importance.

Far more important than gloomy delving into the past is a study of our British future. Can the Empire ever be rebuilt? Can the British nation ever be a great nation again?

To the first question the reply must regretfully be negative. It is almost impossible to imagine the old Empire coming together again in its previous form. This may not matter so much as it may seem at first thought, for the days of empires have probably gone. Something rather similar may take their place, and this new form of world-influence will lie within the reach of any really great nation. The supremely important question then is "Can the British ever be a great nation again?"

To this there is no doubt at all that the answer is a confident "Yes!" I have tried to show how this can come about.

We may have to sink a bit lower yet into the quagmire of apathetic degeneracy before rock bottom is reached. It may need several more shocks to our national complacency before the electorate takes the bit between its teeth. This moment can be substantially hastened if ordinary old-fashioned patriots tirelessly proclaim by every means in their power what they know to be wrong with our

nation. Sooner or later patriotism—that much derided mental outlook—will once more be recognized as a rather important desideratum in the minds of politicians whom we trust with the affairs of our country. The reaction may well be the more violent for having been so long delayed. Patriotism will have a say once more in the rebuilding of our shattered nation.

I have not the space to list in detail all the remedies that will have to be applied, but it is certain that the longer we have to wait for the day of national awakening the more formidable will be the task of the rebuilders.

But one thing must be emphasized, because all else will depend upon it. No nation can be great or recover its lost greatness on a basis of absolute materialism. I have pointed out how even the Soviet union, officially atheistic as it is, relies upon the mystique of an ersatz religion known as Marxism-Leninism.

It is of course an extremely poor substitute for belief in supernatural things because it is frankly a materialistic doctrine.

In the case of our own country and nation, whose former rise to greatness and maintenance of that status was based upon Christianity, there can be no doubt whatsoever that a return to the faith of our fathers will be an essential prerequisite to a British renaissance. Agnosticism or materialism cannot provide the solid foundation on which to rebuild the character and spirit of a nation that has once been Christian and became great under that faith. There is great activity today for Christianizing heathen peoples. A grander, because far more difficult task lies ready to be tackled in our own land—the reconversion of pagan England.

Neglect of God has been at the root of our downfall. If we make the effort to restore Him in our national life He will do the impossible for us. May I close with the psalmist's words quoted at the beginning of this book, for they are the root of our problem.

"Except the Lord build the house their labour is but lost that build it.

"Except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain."

THE END

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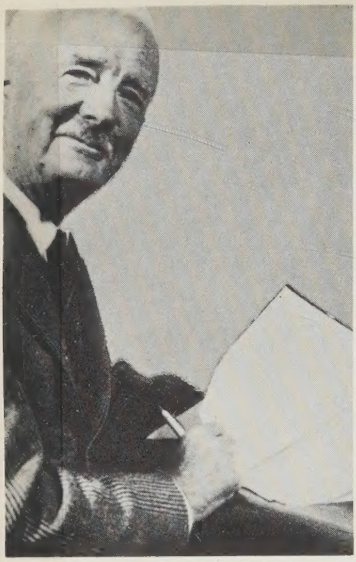

THE AUTHOR TODAY

LONDON in the beautiful summer of 1935 was the scene of one of the greatest pageants in history. A four mile long procession preceeded the State Coach of the King and Emperor, George V, on the occasion of the 25th year of his reign. Besides detachments from all the principal ships of the Royal Navy and every Regiment in the British Army, with their bands, there were naval and military contingents from the white Dominions, there were representatives from the 240 Crown Colonies, and more than a thousand troops from India and as many from the Federated Malay States and from the African colonies. Never had there been such a glittering assembly of Indian Princes and Potentates from all parts of the British Empire, then at its greatest territorial size; larger than any Empire the world had ever known. Loyal greetings had come in their thousands to the King and Queen from every part of this Empire. This family of nations had the strongest possible ties—not the least being that they had voluntarily fought together against a common foe in the deadly war of 1914-18 and would later answer yet another call to arms in the Second World War. A year later, in 1936 as the beloved King lay dying in Buckingham Palace, his last words were: 'I hope all is well with my Empire.' No one would then have thought that thirty years later, an entirely different Empire, despotic, cruel and ruthless, would hold sway over half the world's people as does the Communist Empire of today.

This book is concerned primarily with the baffling demise of one of the greatest political units which the world has ever seen, that family and brotherhood which stretched across the world regardless of race, and was known as the British Empire.

With bold sweeps and unerring instinct the author sets himself the task of discovering the pulse and soul of this vast institution, and the result is a lively and provocative work, free from deadening masses of dates and the dust of arid archives.

He surveys the origins of the British Empire, its upsurge,

its thrusts and rebuffs, from before the great sea-captains of Elizabeth I's reign, through the tragic loss of America and the brilliant conquest of India to the *Pax Britannica* of the last century and the complete collapse of the Empire this century in but a few decades, after unhesitatingly laying down the flower of its manhood in two gigantic wars to make the world safe for civilisation. In doing so he traces the process of betrayal from the First World War Peace Conference in London to the Suez crisis and after. He relates how the late Bernard Baruch, the New York Financier, announced that he was going to the London Peace Conference ' to hold the big stick over the big boys to prevent them from fouling up the peace.' By the ' big boys,' the author shows he meant the statesmen of the victorious allies—men with authority to speak for their own countries. By the ' big stick ' he meant the power of money, since he owned no authority. Mr. Baruch had never been elected to represent any country or any party. He just represented international finance.

In August 1941, Premier Churchill was led to say to President Roosevelt: ' Mr. President, I think you are trying to do away with the British Empire.' The author shows how hard it is for the average Englishman to think that America should have been playing an anti-British game but this is due to confusion of thought on what exactly is meant by America. He maintains that 95 per cent of honest Americans have nothing but friendship and admiration for Great Britain, but their real rulers are men of a very different calibre.

Imperial Obituary successfully brings to light the little recognised fact that it was under the rule of the British and largely due to their leadership and encouragement, that the majority of the nations of the free world of today rose to a position which enabled them, for one reason or another, to renounce their allegiance to the Crown.

THE AUTHOR

Major-General Richard Hilton, D.S.O., M.C., D.F.C., was educated at Malvern College and the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich. He served with distinction in the World War of 1914-18 and was wounded. From 1924 to 1930 he served with the Indian Mounted Artillery and was Staff Captain at the War Office from 1930 to 1933. On the outbreak of the Second World War he was in the British Expeditionary Force and in the early part of the War he was Chief Instructor to the School of Artillery (air). From 1941-1944 he was Commander Royal Artillery 15th (Scottish) Division and was wounded in action. At the end of the war he was Brigadier General Staff to the Allied Liberation Forces in Norway. From 1947 to 1948 he was British Military Attaché in Moscow.

DURING THE WAR

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